

H. Clayton (R.) suc. Bp. of

AN

Hillala &c.

Impartial ENQUIRY

INTO THE

TIME of the coming of the

M E S S I A H:

TOGETHER

With an ABSTRACT of the EVIDENCE
on which the BELIEF of the

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Is founded; in two

L E T T E R S

FROM

*Robert, Lord Bishop of Clogher, to an
Eminent Jew.*

Imperial ENGLISH



CHRISTIAN RELIGION

LETTERS

As with preceding

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L O N D O N:

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE
R E A D E R.

I Should be ungrateful if I did not acknowledge the Obligations I am under to *Ramundus Martinus*, in his Treatise entitled *Pugio Fidei*; and to *Pet. Galatinus*, in his Treatise *de Arcanis catholicæ Veritatis*, for their Reference to several of the Passages which I have here quoted out of the *Talmud* and *Midraschots*.



A N

Impartial ENQUIRY

I N T O T H E

T I M E of the coming of the

M E S S I A H:

S I R,



Proceed now to endeavour to discharge myself of that Promise which I had entered into in my former Letter: And as there ought to be an Umpire in every Dispute, to whose determination the Differences in question are to be referred; I shall set out with acknowledging those Books of the Holy Bible, which you allow to be Canonical, to be the proper Judges of this Controversy. And therefore as I shall frequently have occasion for appealing to them; and as I do not write Hebrew with any readiness, I choose to begin with setting down their Names both
in

in English and Hebrew, that when I quote the English Name, or the Hebrew Word in Roman Characters, you may, by consulting this part of my Treatise, find out what Book it is in the Hebrew Bible to which I refer.

The Names and Order in which you place your Canonical Books, are these.

The Hebrew Name.	The English Name.
בראשית	<i>Genesis</i>
ואלה שמות	<i>Exodus</i>
ויקרא	<i>Leviticus</i>
במדבר סיני	<i>Numbers</i>
אלה הדברים	<i>Deutronomy</i>

Which being the Penteteuch, or, five Books of *Moses*, go under the general Denomination of *the Law*. Then come the Books of the *Prophets*

יהושע	<i>Joshua</i>
שופטים	<i>Judges</i>
שמואל	<i>Samuel</i>
מלכים	<i>Kings</i>

Which

Which four are called the Books of the first Prophets. Then come the four Books of those which are called the latter Prophets, viz.

ישעיה
ירמיה
יחזקאל

Isaiab
Jeremiah
Ezekiel

הושע
יואל
עמוס
עובדיה
יונה
מיכה
נחום
חבקוק
צפניה
חגי
זכריה
מלאכי

} Twelve minor
Prophets.

Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadia
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habbacuck
Zephania
Haggai
Zachariah
Malachi

Then come the Hagiographa, which are

דברי הימים
תהילים
משלי שלמה
איוב
רות

Chronicles
Psalms
Proverbs
Job
Ruth

קהלת	<i>Ecclesiastes</i>
איכה	<i>Lamentations</i>
שיר השירים	<i>Canticles</i>
אסתר	<i>Esther</i>
דניאל	<i>Daniel</i>
עזרא	<i>Ezra</i>

IN which *Nehemiah* is also included. All which, taking the twelve minor Prophets for one Book, make in all twenty four Books of Canonical Scriptures.

IN the Interpretation of which Scriptures or the application of them to the Argument before us, I shall not appeal to any Christian Commentators, of what Eminency soever, but to the Commentators of the Jewish nation, who have either written *Targums* upon the Scriptures, or *Midrascots*, i. e. allegorical Comments; or else, whose Sayings are recorded in the Jewish *Talmud*, against whose Testimony, therefore, the *Jews* can have no Objection.

AND, Sir, as this Letter is not intended barely for your own Use, I shall beg leave, through you, to address myself to the whole Nation of the *Jews*. And because I know it is the Custom with several of the *Jewish* Rabbins, when any of the unlearned raise Difficulties, and de-

fire

fire Information, with regard to any of the Prophecies in the Bible, relating to the *Messiah*, to say to them *Sathum bu*, i. e. it is a hidden or secret Thing; I shall lay before them the Authority upon which the Validity of these *Targums*, the *Midraschots* and the *Talmud* is founded; that the unlearned as well as the learned, may be able to judge of the Force of this Evidence.

The Word *Targum* signifies an *Interpretation*, these Works are therefore so called, because they are a Collection of those Interpretations, which were given to the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible by the most learned Doctors, or Rabbins, of the *Jewish* Nation. For the *Jews*, at least many of the lower, and younger sort, during their long Continuance under the *Babylonish Captivity*, being separated from one another, and forced to converse with the *Chaldeans*, thereby learned the *Chaldee* Language; and forgot the *Hebrew*, which was their ancient native Tongue. Infomuch that * *Ezra*, when he read the Law to the People, upon their

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return

* Nehem. viii. 4, 8.

return to *Jerusalem*, had several Persons standing by him, well skilled both in the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* Languages, who interpreted to the People, in *Chaldee*, what he first read to them in *Hebrew*. And afterwards when the Method was established of dividing the Law into Fifty-four Sections, and of Reading one of them every Week in the Synagogue, the same Method of Reading to the People the *Hebrew* Text first, and then of interpreting it into *Chaldee*, was still continued. And as these several *Interpretations*, in Time became very Voluminous, certian Rabbins undertook to Collect them together, and this Collection they called the *Targum*. The two most famous *Targums*, or Works of this kind, that are come to our Times, are those of *Jonathan* and *Onkelos*.

I am very sensible that the Jewish Rabbins are not universally agreed, about the precise time when these *Targums* were composed; but the most probable Opinion is that R. *Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, who was bred in the School of *Hillel*, lived under the Reign of *Herod* the Great, and that the

Targum

Targum of *Onkelos*, which is rather a Version than a Paraphrase, is still older: And that the reason, why * *Jonathan*, according to the Opinion of some *Rabbins*, paraphrased only the Prophets, was, because that *Onkelos* had executed his *Targum* on *Penteteuch* with so much Success as to render any further Paraphrase needless.

The *Midraschot's* or *Deraschots* are allegorical Interpretations on the Books of the Scriptures, which have been published by several of the most learned *Rabbins*, being derived from the radical Word דרש *Quere* to *Inquire*. By which Word therefore it is intended to denote that these Works are *Inquiries* into the hidden or spiritual meaning which is mystically couched under the literal Expressions in the Scriptures.

The Word *Talmud* signifies the same Thing with *Doctrine* or *Discipline*; and therefore the Work which goes under

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this

* There is a *Targum* on the *Penteteuch*, said to have been composed by *Jonathan*, which is undoubtedly ancient, though it is contested, whether it was written by him or not. There is also a *Targum* called the *Jerusalem Targum*, which is likewise ancient, but not of equal Repute with those of *Jonathan* and *Onkelos*.

this Title, contains a Collection of all the Traditions of the *Jews*, which relate either to their Doctrine or Discipline. The occasion of which Collection being made was this. It hath been an established Opinion among the greatest † part of the *Jews*; that besides the written Law which was delivered to *Moses* at Mount *Sinai*; there was also an oral Law delivered to him at the same Time, which hath been conveyed down by the Traditions of the Prophets and Rabbins; and which they think themselves under the same Obligation to observe as the written Word itself. Which Traditions however, were never collected and set down together in one Volum, till about 600 Years ago, when *Rab* * *Judas Ben Simon* about 120 Years after the Destruction of the second Temple, compiled them together in six Books, which he entitled משנה *Mishna* or *Misna*, which signifies the *repeated Reading*. Upon which
several

† A great number of Jews however, who are distinguished by the Name of *Karraïtes*, allow no Weight, or at least comparatively speaking, very little, to any *Traditions*, and adhere entirely to the written Word.

* *N. B.* This *R. Judah*, was on account of the Sanctity of his Life, called *Haccados*, i. e. the *holy*.

several of the most learned of the *Jews*, having immediately employed themselves in writing Comments, these Comments were called the *Gemara*, i. e. *Perfection*: Because that the *Misna* being explained thereby, the whole traditionary Doctrine of the *Jewish* Law and Religion, was in their opinion *perfected* and compleated: The *Misna* being the Text and the *Gemara*, the Comment thereupon.

But as this *Gemara* was not the Work of one Man but of several, and that made at various Times and on various Parts of the *Misna*; *Johanan*, about 300 Years after the Destruction of the Temple, with the assistance of some other Rabbins, made a Collection of all these Comments, and putting them and the *Misna* together composed that Work which goes under the Denomination of *the Jerusalem Talmud*; because it was compiled by the *Jews* of *Judaea*. But these Comments still encreasing; about 436 Years, or according to others, about 500 Years, after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; Rab *Assa* undertook making a new Collection, and composed
that

that Work which goes under the Name of the *Babylonish Talmud*, because it was composed by the *Jews* of *Babylon*; and is divided just into as many Parts, which are called סדרים *Sedarim*, Orders or Heads, that is six, as the *Misna* was originally. Which last *Talmud* is that which is in the highest Esteem among the *Jews*, not only on account of its Style, which is less antiquated than that of *Jerusalem*, but also on account of its being fuller than the former one, and for containing some Traditions more adapted to the Notions of those *Jews* who are unwilling to acknowledge the *Messiah* to be already come

Now as this Book of the *Talmud* is held by most of the *Jews*, to be very nearly, if not absolutely of equal Authority with the Scriptures, I hope I shall be excused for the frequent Quotations I make out of it. And as I think universal Benevolence to be the Duty of all Mankind, I shall make no further Apology for the Trouble I give myself, and those who shall peruse this Address, than to assure them, that it
proceeds

proceeds alone from the sincere Good-will which the Author of this Paper bears towards all Mankind in general, and to you Sir, and your Nation in particular.

It is to your and to our Father *Abraham*, for we Christian Gentiles pride ourselves in that * Title by adoption, that we are indebted for *the Promises*; and it is through the Hands of the *Jews*, that we acknowledge to have received *the sacred Writings* of the Ancient Prophets; to them therefore, and their Writings, we join with you in our Appeal, as to an impartial and unerring Judge in the determination of this Controversy.

But before we proceed any further, it seems proper, in order to avoid all Disputes about Words, to declare what I mean by the Word *Messiah*. This Word literally, signifies *one that is anointed*, which was a Ceremony used under the *Mosaical* Dispensation, in † *sanctifying* or *separating* particular Persons to particular Offices, such as of || *Kings, Priests, or Prophets*.
And

* See *Rom.* iv. 11. &c. &c. † See *Ex.* xxviii. 41.
|| i. *Sam.* xii. 5. ii. *Sam.* ii. 7. *Ex.* xxix. 7. *Is.* lxi. 1.

And as there is Reason from the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible, to believe that God hath from the Foundation of the World appointed some one Person of extraordinary Note, to be as a *King*, *Priest* and *Prophet* to the Nation of the *Jews*, and through them to *all the Nations of the Earth, in whom they shall all be blessed*: Therefore this extraordinary Person is by way of Eminence, distinguished by the Title of *the Messiah*, according to the Hebrew, or of *the Christ*, according to the Idiom of the Greek Tongue, which also literally signifies *The anointed*.

And therefore we find this extraordinary Person described in the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible, under each of these Characters; that is, as a *King*, as a *Priest*, and as a *Prophet*. Not that we are to expect to find this as fully and as plainly described, as that he that runneth may read; but so as that they who search the Scriptures with Diligence and Industry, and are of a teachable Disposition, may discover it there with sufficient ease. For though Almighty God hath framed Mankind for Happiness, yet

yet this Happiness is not to be acquired without a little Labour and Industry on our Parts. The Earth will bring forth Briars and Thorns, if we do not take Care to cultivate and *till* it: The Oar lies hid in the Bowels of a barren Mountain, and is to be discovered by a few Marks in the Surface, known only to the Curious and Inquisitive. And why is all this Wealth so artfully concealed? Only to try and prove the Industry of Man. Knowledge also in general lieth deep, it must be dugg for before it is found; And why? Only to prove us, and try whether we think it worth the searching for.

And for this Reason it is that, although in the History of the Hebrew Bible, which seems to have been written chiefly with a View to instruct the Jews in the expectation of the *Messiah* before his coming, and the Knowledge of him when come; he is nevertheless rather obscurely hinted at, than openly revealed, * *here a little and there a little*, that those who will not use
their

* *Isai* xxviii. 13.

their own proper Endeavours to discover the Truth, *may go and fall backwards and be broken, and snared and taken.* Or as the Prophet *Daniel* expresses it, that * *none of the Wicked may understand, but that the Wise may understand.*

And hence it ariseth that there are such different Opinions concerning this extraordinary Person, and that the Jews and Christians differ so widely about him. And what contributes much thereto, seems to be this; that the Jews, out of a national Partiality towards themselves, are too apt to confine the Office of the *Messiah*, and the Benefit of his coming to their own Nation; and to suppose the Kingdom promised him to be entirely of this World; and that the cheif Purport of his coming is to restore the Temporal Kingdom of *Israel* and re-establish the Throne of *David*. Whereas though it cannot be denied, but that the Nation of the Jews have been particularly favoured of God in the Promises made unto *Abraham*, that in his Seed
should

Should ALL THE NATIONS of the Earth be blessed; yet surely the Jews ought to consider, that although the Honour of being the Instrument of Happiness to all Mankind was conferred on the Seed of *Abraham*, yet that the Blessing was designed to *all Nations*, as well as them.

And that the Benefit which was to accrue to all Mankind in general, was the chief Purport of the coming of the *Messiah* is manifest from the Promise made to *Eve* immediately upon the Transgression of our first Parents; when God speaking to her concerning the Serpent, said, * *I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise its Heel*: Which Text is by the Jews themselves, acknowledged to refer to the *Messiah*, and is applied to him by Name in the *Targums* of *Jonathan* and *Jerusalem*.

As therefore the whole Race of Mankind was equally affected by the Fall of *Adam* and *Eve*, if the *Messiah* comes to bruise the Serpents Head, the Redemption
from

* Gen. iii. 15.

from the evil Consequences of this Fall, must extend also to the whole Race of Mankind, of which the Jews are but a Part, and a very small Part.

And if we consult the original Promises, which were made by God, concerning this *Messiah*, to *Abraham*, to *Isaac* and to *Jacob*, we shall find from them that the Benefit of all Mankind in general, and not of any one Nation in particular, was the chief Design of the coming of the *Messiah*. And accordingly we read, that when God sent forth *Abraham* out of his Country, and from his Kindred, and from his Father's House, to go into a Land that he would shew him; he then for the first Time, declared unto him † *I will make of thee a great Nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy Name great, and thou shalt be a Blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: And IN THEE, SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.* God does not say, in thee or in one of thy Seed shall the rest of thy Seed be blessed; but
as

† Gen. xii. 2, 3.

as it is again repeated, when his Son *Isaac* was promised to him, * *in him shall ALL THE NATIONS of the Earth be blessed.* And again, when *Abraham* had submitted to sacrifice his Son *Isaac*, God said unto him, † *IN THEE SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED, because thou hast obeyed my Voice.* And to *Isaac* God said, ‖ *I will make thy Seed to multiply as the Stars of Heaven, and will give unto thy Seed all these Countries, and IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.* And when God was pleased to renew this Promise to *Jacob*, he said, § *Thy Seed shall be as the Dust, and thou shalt spread abroad to the West, and to the East, and to the North, and to the South; and IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.*

Now as these Texts of Scripture are universally allowed, both by the Jews and Christians, to refer to the *Messiah*, it therefore follows of Consequence, that the Benefit of the *Messiah's* coming was designed to

* *Gen.* xviii, 18. † *Gen.* xxii. 18. ‖ *Gen.* xxiv. 4.
§ *Gen.* xxviii. 14.

to extend to all Mankind; and corresponds with the Promise made to our first Parent, that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head, so that as in *Adam* all died, even so in the *Messiah* should all be made alive.

And hence it further appears that the Law of *Moses* cannot possibly be the Law of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*; because the Law of *Moses* is plainly designed as a Body of Laws, peculiar to the Jewish Nation, to keep them separate and distinct from all the Nations of the Earth besides.

I am sensible that the Subject which I am now entering upon is a very tender and delicate Point; and that it is an exceeding adventurous Undertaking, to attempt to persuade the Nation of the Jews that the Laws of *Moses* in general, except the Laws of the two Tables, which alone perhaps, were for that very Reason, written particularly on Stone, as a Type of their duration, were only designed by God to be temporary Laws; and that the ceremonial Part is entirely to be abolished by the coming of the *Messiah*. But I am not without

without Hopes, when they consider that the *Messiah* was not sent to the Jews alone, but that *all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed in him*; and recollect how small a Portion the Jews make of all the Nations of the Earth, that God will open their Eyes, and enlarge their Views, to consider the rest of Mankind as their Fellow Creatures, and in some Sense as their Brethren, being all both Jews and Gentiles, equally the Sons of *Adam*, or still more nearly related as the Sons of *Noah*; and that it must be exceeding absurd for them to imagine that God is the God of the Jews only, and not also of the Gentiles.

It was undoubtedly a kind and gracious Act in God, during the Infancy of the World, while Mankind was rude and uncultivated, and guided by little more than their Senses, in the choice of their Gods; while the Notions of Art Magic, a Regard for judicial Astrology, an Opinion of Witchcraft and Socery, and such ridiculous Impositions of artfull Men prevailed, to separate *Abraham* and his Seed, from the rest of Mankind; because God knew that he
would

would * *command his Children and his Household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do Justice and Judgment.* And therefore about 300 Years after the Flood, when the Sons of Men had forgotten the traditionary Precepts, which had been delivered them by their common Parent *Noah*, and began almost universally to degenerate into Idolatry ; then did it please God, to command *Abraham* to leave his Native Country, and to † circumcise every Man-child that belonged unto him, being either born of himself or bought with his Money : That by the Institution of this painfull and rigorous Ceremony they might be kept separate and distinct from the Nations round about ; and might thereby be preserved from the general Corruption of Idolatry, which then prevailed, and into which they might otherwise have been unguardedly led, by too frequent and free a Communication between them and the rest of Mankind. And accordingly § *Tacitus* the

* *Gen. xviii. 19.* † *Gen. xvii. 11.* § *Circumcidere Genitalia instituere, ut Diversitate noscantur. Tacit. Hist. l. v. C. 5.*

the Roman Historian, makes this to be the chief Reason for the Jewish Practice of Circumcision, when speaking of the Jews he says, that *Circumcision was instituted to preserve the Jews as a distinct People.*

And about 400 Years after that, when the Progeny of *Abraham* was grown to be very numerous, it pleased God to give them by the Mediation of *Moses* a sett of Laws peculiar to themselves, suited and adapted to their particular Circumstances; with an Intent to preserve them from being contaminated with the superstitious Ceremonies, and idolatrous Practices of their Neighbours: Wherein, among several others, the Command given to *Abraham* was renewed, and the Reason thereof more fully explained, by positively prohibiting all familiar Intercourse, and especially Marriage, * with the neighbouring Nations: This very Reason being assigned for it by *Moses*, least they should *turn* the Children of Israel *to serve other Gods.* And

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for

* See *Gen.* xxxiv. 14, and compare it with *Exod.* xxxiv. 16, *Deut.* vii. 3, i. *Kings*, xi. 2.

for this Reason also, it was that God † by *Moses*, appointed but one Place of publick Worship for the Nation of the Jews, where they should offer up their Oblations and their Sacrifices, and where Justice and Judgment should be administred unto them, which must be inconsistent with the extensive Views of the *Messiah*.

But in length of Time, as the World grew more wise, and did by long Experience discover many of the Cheats and Frauds of Magicians and Negromancers, and pretended Oracles; and Men by acquiring a better * Knowledge of the Planetary System and of physical and secondary Causes, began to enquire after *a first Cause*; then did Idolatry begin to abate of its Force, not only among the Jews, but also among the Gentiles; many of whom, and in particular § *Cicero*, wrote a Treatise 1800 Years ago, ridiculing all the pretended Forms of Divination, and acknowledging the Decay of oracular Determinations, and

† *Deut.* xii. 5, 6. xvii. 8. &c. * It was *Julius Cæsar* who first rectified the *Roman Calendar*, so as to bring it near the Form in which it now is. § *Cic. de Divin.* and *Nat. Deor.* as also *Plutarch de Defect, Orac.*

and the imaginary Forms and Denominations of their Deities: And at the same Time the Græcians had erected Altars *to the unknown God*. By which Means the Danger of their Conversation being in some Degree removed, and their Minds being prepared for the Reception of a truer System of Divinity, those separating Laws which inhibited the Jews from the Communication of Mankind, became useless; and the rest of the World being ready and prepared to receive and acknowledge the Belief of the one true God, it seems reasonable that the Partition Wall between Jew and Gentile should be broken down, and the Knowledge of the one true and invisible God, which had hitherto been preserved among the Jews alone, should be communicated through them to all Mankind.

And that the Information not only of the Jews, but of Mankind in general, in the Knowledge of true Religion, was one of the wise Purposes for which the *Messiah* was to be sent into World is manifest from the Prophet *Isaiah*, when speaking

of the *Messiah* in the Name of God, he says, * *Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth Judgment to THE GENTILES. I the Lord have called thee in Righteousness, and will hold thine Hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee for a Covenant of THE PEOPLE, for a Light of THE GENTILES.* And again the same Prophet sayeth, † *And now saith the Lord that formed me from the Womb to be his Servant, to bring Jacob again to him, and that § Israel may be gathered to him, and that I may be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my Strength. And he said is it a small Thing that thou shouldst be my Servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the || Captivity of Israel?* I ALSO WILL GIVE THEE TO BE A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES, THAT THOU MAYEST BE MY SALVATION TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. And hence

* *Isai. xlii. 1, 6.* † *Isai. xlix. 5, 6.* § In the Hebrew, *and shall not Israel be gathered?* || So the Sept. Version and the Targum of *Jonatban* render it.

hence it is that the Jewish Rabbins themselves are forced to acknowledge that *the Gentiles* are to be saved by the *Messiah*, as well as the Jews. And to this Purpose you may find it expressed in that *Midras*, which is entitled *Beresbith Rabba*, where on the xli Chapter, Rabbi *Aba* makes this Reflexion, “ Can it be said that the Redeemer is a respecter of Persons? Far from us be such an Imagination. For he will save and deliver all Persons who confide in him, in Thought Word and Deed. For so the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, in Chap. xlv. *Look unto me and be saved, all ye Ends of the Earth.* And again he saith, *For unto me every Knee shall bow, every Tongue shall swear.* And in the xxix. Chapter, saith *I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my Salvation, to the Ends of the Earth, &c.*” And to the same Purpose you will also find the Sentiments of *R. Juda*, in the *Talmud*, under the Head *Massecheth bicurim*.

Whenever therefore the *Messiah* cometh, for whether he be yet come or not, I do

not at present assert, certain it is that the ceremonial Part of the Law of Moses must be superseded. And for this Reason it is that the *Messiah* is so particularly described by the Prophet *Isaiah* as *setting up* * *an Ensign to the Nations*, that is, enlisting them under his Banner; and as † *sprinkling many Nations*, that is receiving them as Protelytes to his Doctrine, by the Form of Baptism; And again speaking as from God, the same Prophet sayeth, § *I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure Mercies of David*, that is, the sure Mercies of sending his Son the *Messiah*, which was promised to David, *Behold, I have given him for a Witness to THE PEOPLE, a Leader and Commander to the People. Behold, thou shalt call a Nation that thou knowest not, and NATIONS that know not thee shall run unto thee.* And again, || *The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from Transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. Arise, shine for thy Light is come, and the*

* *Isai. v. 26. xi. 10, 12.* † *Isai. liii. 15.* § *Isai. lv. iii. v.* || *Isai. lix. 20. lx. 1, 2, 3.*

*the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, For behold Darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs Darkneſs THE PEOPLE, but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee and his Glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee: And the GENTILES ſhall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightneſs of thy riſing. And therefore the ſame Prophet alſo ſayeth, * Neither let the Son of the Stranger, that hath joyned himſelf to the Lord ſpeak, ſaying, The Lord hath utterly ſeperated me from his People. For ſays he again, † In this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto ALL PEOPLE a Feaſt of Fat Things, Which Fat Things were prohibited to be eaten by the Moſaical Law, for all the Fat is the Lord's, ſays § Moſes, of Fat Things full of Marrow; a Feaſt of Wines on the Lees, well refined. And he will ſwallow up in this Mountain the covering which covered all People, and the Vail that is ſpread over all Nations: That is, he will remove the covering of Darkneſs, wherewith the Gentiles were covered, and
the*

* Ifai. lvi. iii. † Iſa. xlv. 6. 7. § Lev. iii. 16.

the Vail by which they were seperated from his People of *Israel*: Than which one cannot well conceive any Prophetical Declaration to be more plain or more expressive of Gods determined Purpose, some Time or other, to remove the Distinction betwixt Jew and Gentile, by a Law which is to be published by *the Redeemer* when he cometh to *Zion*.

And to this Purpose we shall also find the Prophet *Malachi* to be very explicit, who wrote after the Babylonish Captivity was at an End, and who mentions the History of *Esau* and *Jacob* as being the Type of two distinct Covenants; the one, that is, the old Covenant, made with the Seed of *Abraham* by *Moses*, which is represented under the Type of *Esau*, who is the Elder Brother, and the other the New Covenant, made with *all Nations* by the *Messiah*, which is represented by *Jacob* who was the younger Brother, and yet nevertheless got the Blessing. For says the Prophet, when speaking to the Children of *Israel*, *I loved you says the Lord: yet you say, wherein hast thou Loved us? Was*
not

not Esau Jacob's Brother? says the Lord. Yet I loved Jacob and hated Esau; and laid his Mountains, and his Heritage waste for the Dragons of the Wilderness. Whereas Edom saith we are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate Places. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, they shall build, but I will throw down; and they i.e. the Heathen, shall call them, the Border of Wickedness and the People against whom the Lord hath Indignation for ever. For from the rising up of the Sun unto the going of the same, my Name shall be great amongst the Gentiles, and in every Place Incense shall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering, for my Name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts. Mal. i. 1. 11.

And accordingly we find that Prophet, who was promised to the Children of Israel, when the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, * I will raise up a PROPHET from among their Brethren, LIKE UNTO THEE, and will put my Words in his Mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him. And it shall come to pass, that whoso-

ever

ever will not hearken unto my Words, which he shall speak in my Name I will require it of him. I say we shall find this Prophet declared by the Jewish Commentators to be the *Messiah*.

Thus you may find it said in *Midras Coheleth*, that is in the Exposition of the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, on those Words of Chap. i. v. 9. *The thing that hath been, is that which shall be.* Where R. Berachias saith in the Name of R. *Isaac*. "As was the
 " first Redeemer, that is *Moses*, so will the
 " last Redeemer be, that is, the *Messiah*. But
 " wherein consists the Similitude? Herein:
 " as it is said *Exod. iv. 20. And Moses took*
 " *his Wife, and his Sons and set them upon*
 " *an Ass.* For so shall the last Redeemer
 " do: As it is said, *Zachariah ix. v. 9.*
 " *He is Just, and having Salvation, low-*
 " *ly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a*
 " *Colt the Foal of an Ass.* And forasmuch
 " as the first Redeemer caused *Manna* to
 " descend; as it is written *Exodus xvi. v.*
 " *4. Behold I will rain Bread from*
 " *Heaven for you*; so shall the second
 Redeemer be as pure Bread on the Earth,
 " as

“ as it is said in the *Psal.* lxxii. v. 16.
 “ *There shall be a Portion of Corn upon*
 “ *the Earth.* And as the first Rede-mer
 “ made a Fountain to spring up, so shall
 “ the last Redeemer, that is the *Messiah*,
 “ make Fountains of Water to arise; as it
 “ is said in the last Chapter of *Joel*, v. 18.
 “ *And a Fountain of Water shall come*
 “ *forth out of the House of the Lord, and*
 “ *shall water the Valley of Shittim.*”

Thus far the Tradition. Not that I ap-
 prove of the Method of Reasoning, for I
 think it is rather too forced; but I only
 produce it to shew the Matter of Fact, that
Moses was esteemed by the most ancient
 learned Jews as a Type of the *Messiah*.
 And that * they understood this Portion of
 Scripture to be applicable to him.

For though it cannot be doubted, but
 that every Prophet, who is sent from God,
 hath a Right to require our Attendance and
 Obedience to the Words which he shall
 speak in the Name of God; yet is it mani-
 fest, that this Description here given, of a
 Prophet that was to be sent unto the Chil-
 dren

* See also Dav. Kimchi, in Lib. Shorash, Rad. מִשְׁחָה

dren of *Israel* from among their Brethren, alludes to some one particular and extraordinary Prophet, who was to be more like *Moses* than any of the rest.

Which *Similitude* between *Moses* and that Prophet, seems to consist in receiving some new Law from God as *Moses* did, Face to Face, and in being empowered to work Miracles, in Confirmation of this Mission as *Moses* was, rather than in those trifling Circumstances which are enumerated by *R. Ishac*. And in this Opinion we are supported by the Author of the last Chapter of the Book of *Deutronomy*, which seems to have been written a good while after the Death of *Moses*, where the Author, who ever he was, saith, *And there arose not a Prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew Face to Face; in all the Signs and the Wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the Land of Egypt, to Pharoah, and to all his Servants, and to all his Land; and in all that mighty Hand, and in all the great Terrour which Moses shewed in the Sight of all Israel.*

And

And accordingly the Jews themselves acknowledge that the *Messiah* whenever he cometh, shall do both of these; that is, shall publish a *New Law* and work *Miracles*. That he shall work Miracles appears from the *Targum* of *Jonathan*, on *Isai*. liii. 8. Where the Paraphrast speaking of the *Messiah* adds in, *but the wonderful Works that shall be done in those Days, who shall be able to tell?* as also from the Commentary of *R. Moses Hadarson* on *Pf*. lxxii 9. Where he saith, “ *R. Natronai* asked “ what does that mean, *We see not our* “ *Signs, there is no more any Prophet,* “ *neither is there among us any that know-* “ *eth how long?* To whom *R. Aha* answered, this is said of that wicked Generation, who will not believe the Signs or “ Miracles which our holy *Messiah* shall “ perform; but shall say of him, that he “ doth these Things by the Power of Art “ Magick. And that those Miracles which “ he shall perform, are not the Miracles “ which were predicted of the *Messiah*. “ And that, as there is no Prophet to set “ the Truth before them, if he doth not “ bring

“ bring some Proof of the Truth of his
 “ Assertions, they will put him to Death.
 “ Wherefore the Prophet, (in the follow-
 “ ing Verse) cryeth out *O God how long*
 “ *shall the Adversary reproach? Shall the*
 “ *Enemy blaspheme thy Name for ever?*

And that it was the Opinion of the most ancient Jewish Rabbins that the *Messiah* whenever he cometh shall not only be empowered to work Miracles *like unto Moses*, but shall also teach them a new Law, appears again from the Targum of R. *Jonathan* on *Isai. xii. 3.* *Therefore with Joy shall he draw Waier out of the Well of Salvation.* Which Passage is universally acknowledged by the Jews to refer to the *Messiah*, and which the Chaldee Paraphrast renders thus, *Therefore with Joy shall you receive A NEW DOCTRINE from the Elect of the Just.* And in *Midras Tchillim* in the Observations on *Psal. xxi. 1.* where the Psalmist saith, *The King shall rejoice in thy Strength, O Lord, and in thy Salvation how greatly shall he Rejoyce!* The Expofitor remarketh, that “ This is it which
 “ is written in *Isaiah xi. 10.* *And in that*
 “ *Day*

“ *Day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which*
 “ *shall stand for an Ensign to the People.*
 “ Upon which *R. Hanna* said, that the
 “ King Messiah should not come but to
 “ give *new Precepts* to the People.

Again in *Midras Cobelet*, on Chapter
 ii. 1. *I said in my Heart go to now, I will*
prove thee with Joy; therefore enjoy
Good, and behold this also is Vanity. The
 Expofitor remarketh, “ What Good is
 “ here meant, is it not the Law? Why
 “ then doth not the Preacher say, behold
 “ this is Joy? What therefore is it that he
 “ means by saying, this also is Vanity? To
 “ which *R. Hizkita* answered; Because
 “ all the Law which is learned in this pre-
 “ sent Age is all Vanity in Regard to that
 “ of the Age which is to come. And that
 the Days of the *Messiah* is meant by that
 Age which is to come appears from the
 same Book, on *Ecclesiastes*, xi. 8. *But if*
a Man live many Years, let him rejoice
in them all, and yet let him remember the
Days of his Darknefs. Which is thus
 paraphrafed. “ If a Man live many Years,
 “ let him rejoice in them all, viz. With
 “ the

“ the Joy of the Law : and let him re-
 “ member the Days of his Darkneſs, which
 “ are many. For every thing that comes
 “ before, and all the Laws which a Man
 “ can learn in this Age are all Vanity in
 “ Compariſon with the Laws of the Meſ-
 “ ſiah.

And accordingly the Prophet * *Jeremiah* ſpeaketh of a *new Covenant* different from that made at Mount *Sinai*, which was to be publiſhed in the Days of the *Meſſiah* ; For, ſays he, *Behold the Day is come ſaith the Lord, that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the Houſe of Iſrael and with the Houſe of Judah : Not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers in the Day that I took them by the Hand, to bring them out of the Land of Egypt, &c.* And agreeably thereto the Prophets † *Iſaiah* and § *Micah* deſcribe the *Meſſiah* as publiſhing *the Law from Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem.*

Now

* *Jerem.* xxxi. 31. † *Iſai.* ii. 2. 3. § *Micah* iv. 2, 3.

Now if this Law which was to go forth out of *Zion*, and which was to be published from *Jerusalem*, was not to be a *new Covenant*, and to be different from that which had been dictated from Mount *Sinai*, what Need was there for another Prophet to be sent with a Power of doing Miracles *like unto Moses*? And what use would there be for those Miracles, which the Jews themselves allow the *Messiah* will perform, if there is no new Commission to be evidenced by them? Or why should *the Nations* be desirous to go up to the Mountain of the Lord, that they might learn his Ways and walk in his Paths; if the Laws of *Moses*, which excluded them out of the Temple, and out of the Society of Jews, were still to continue in Force?

I am very sensible that it may be objected, that they might be admitted if they would turn Profelytes and be Circumcised. But to this it is easily answered. That then this would be no *new Law*: Because this was the very Thing which had hitherto prevented the devout Gentiles, and would continue to prevent them from con-

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forming

forming, even from the Days of *Moses* to the Days of the *Messiah*. And though it should be added, that *Moses* declareth that his Laws were given to the Israelites for Statutes and for Ordinances עולם *forever*; yet it cannot well be denied, and is accordingly acknowledged by some of the most learned of the * Jews themselves, that this Word is frequently applied to Things, which are to have a Determination, and *that* even in the space of a few Years; provided that the precise Time of the Determination is not particularly specified. Thus the Stones which † *Joshua* erected upon passing the River *Jordan*, which have been long since removed, are said to have been placed there, *as a Memorial to the Children of Israel* עולם *for ever*. And the Temple that *Solomon* built, which lasted only about 400 Years, is said to have been erected as § *an Habitation for God* עולם *for ever*. With numberless other Instances which might be produced, where this Word

* Vide *Raschi* and *Aben Ezra*, in *Exod.* xxi. 6. See also the Gloss of *R. Solomon*, on *i. Sam.* i. 22. As also the Remarks in *Midras elle Hadebarim*, on *Deut.* xv. 17. † *Josh.* iv. 7. § *i. Kings* viii. 13.

Word *for ever* is applied to finite Things provided that the exact Period of their continuance is not particularly denoted.

And accordingly it is the acknowledged Opinion of some of the most ancient of the Jewish Rabbins that the Distinction between Jew and Gentile shall be so far removed, that all Meat shall be clean, in the Days of the *Messiah*. For to this Purpose you will find it positively declared in *Beresbith Rabba*, where *R. Moses Hadarson* on *Gen. xli. 1.* Sc. Observes that “ This
 “ is alluded to in *Psalms cxlvi. 8.* In these
 “ Words, *The Lord looseth those that are*
 “ *bound.* For, saith he, every Beast which
 “ is now in this Age reputed unclean the
 “ holy and blessed God shall make clean
 “ in the Age which is to come, that is,
 “ in the Days of the *Messiah*, as every
 “ Thing was clean at first to the Sons of
 “ *Noah*; as it is said, *Gen. ix. 3.* Every
 “ *moving Thing that liveth shall be Meat*
 “ *for you; even as the green Herb have*
 “ *I given you all Things.* Wherefore as
 “ all green Herbs were clean to every Body,
 “ and as all Animals and Beasts were clean

“ to the Sons of *Noah*; so also in the Age
 “ which is to come, that is, in the Days
 “ of the Messiah, *He shall loose those that*
 “ *are bound.*

Thus far therefore it appears, even by the Concession of the most ancient and learned Jews, that the Laws of *Moses* ought to be considered as temporary Laws, which were only to last to the coming of the *Messiah*; who when he cometh, is to publish a *new Covenant* from *Zion*, and the Word of the Lord from *Jerusalem*.

And as to his restoring the Captivity of *Jacob*, in a literal Sense, by re-establishing the Service of the Jewish Temple, and the Ceremonial Parts of the Mosaical Institution, many of the most learned Jews, are so far of a contrary Opinion, that they assert the Kingdom of the Messiah in its triumphant State is not to be governed like the rest of the Kingdoms of this World.

And accordingly some of the Jewish Rabbins, as mentioned in the *Talmud*, have
 acknow-

acknowledged it to be their Opinion, that the third Temple mentioned in the Prophecy of *Ezekiel*, which is to be built in the Days of the *Messiah*, is to be in Heaven; and is therefore to be understood as emblematically descriptive of the Grandeur of the Kingdom of the *Messiah*, in another World, and not in this. As appears from the express Declarations of R. *Abba*, in that Part of the *Talmud* entitled *Shanedrim*, Section *Helec*, where he declares “ That the
 “ City mentioned in *Ezekiel* xlviii. 30.
 “ Sc. as being *eighteen Thousand* Measures about, ought to be spiritually understood of that City which is in the
 “ Presence of God. And the Gloss of R. *Solomon* saith “ That the City mentioned
 “ towards the End of *Ezekiel* is to be understood of that *Jerusalem* which is above. Which City is not to be inhabited by mortal Men, but by those Saints
 “ and holy Persons, who having finished
 “ their Course in this Life, shall be raised out
 “ of their Graves by the Power of the *Messiah*
 “ to partake with him in the Glory

“ and Happiness which is prepared for them
 “ in his heavenly Kingdom.

And to the same Purpose you will find
 it expressed in the *Midras* of *R. Moses*
Hadarsan upon *Gen. ii. 9.* *And out of*
the Ground made the Lord God to grow
every Tree, &c. Where the *Gloss* saith,
 “ All our Fathers, and *Moses* and *Aaron*,
 “ and *David* and *Solomon*, and all the
 “ Kings of the House of *David*, and all
 “ the Prophets shall say unto the *Messiah*,
 “ the End is near; to you it belongeth to
 “ raise us from the Dead, as it is said in
 “ *Hosea vi. 2.* *After two Days will he*
 “ *revive us, in the third Day he will raise*
 “ *us up, and we shall live in his Sight.*
 “ Even *Corab* and his Company, and *Ab-*
 “ *salom* shall come to the *Messiah*, and say,
 “ how long will it be to the End of these
 “ wonderful Things? And when will you
 “ return and restore us to Life? As it is
 “ said in *Psal. lxxxv. 5, 6.* *Wilt thou be an-*
 “ *gry with us forever; Wilt thou draw out*
 “ *thine Anger to all Generations; Wilt thou*
 “ *not revive us again; that thy People*
 “ *may rejoice in thee?* Which certainly

ly seems to be a much more rational Scheme than to suppose *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, to whom the Promises were made, not to be Partakers of the Blessings of the Reign of the *Messiah*, the Benefits of which should be reserved only for a few of their Posterity here upon this Earth, at the Distance from them of some Thousands of Generations.

But then it may be asked; Is not the Messiah to appear in a triumphant State upon Earth? Is he not to be born of the Seed of *Abraham*, and the Offspring of *David*? He is. But then at the Time of his first coming, when he comes upon Earth, as the Son of Man, he is not to appear in his State of Exaltation and Glory, but in a State of Humiliation and Abasement, of Poverty and Distress. According to the Description given of him by the Prophet * *Jeremiah*, *O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in the Time of Trouble, why shouldst thou be as a Stranger in the Land, and as a way-faring Man, that turneth aside to tarry for a Night? Why shouldst thou*

* *Jer.* xiv. 8, 9.

thou be as a Man astonished, as a mighty Man that cannot save? Or as he is described by the Prophet † *Zechariah*, When he saith, *Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Zion; Shout O Daughter of Jerusalem; Behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having Salvation, lowly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass.* Which Texts are almost universally acknowledged by the Jews, to refer to the Messiah.

Which also corresponds with the Sentiments of R *Moses Hadarsan* and R *Abba*, who suppose the *Messiah* to have voluntarily undertaken the Redemption of Mankind, and upon that Account to be sent here upon Earth in a State of suffering and Tribulation, as a Trial of his Obedience to God, and his Love to Mankind. As will appear manifestly by quoting the Words of R *Moses Hadarsan*, on *Gen. i. 3.* *And God said let there be Light and there was Light.* “ Which, saith he, corresponds “ with what we find written in the xcvi
“ Psalm,

† *Zach. ix. 9.*

“ Psalm, *Light is sprung up to the Righte-*
 “ *ous.* which R *Abba* said, was also couch-
 “ ed in the Words of *Daniel* ii, 22. Where
 “ it is said, *And the Light dwelleth with*
 “ *him.* The Light which is meant thereby
 “ being the Light of the King *Messiah.* so
 “ also is it said of him Psalm xxxvi, 9. *For*
 “ *with thee is the Fountain of Life, and*
 “ *in thy Sight shall we see Light;* which
 “ is to be understood of the Light of *Mes-*
 “ *siah* the King. He also teacheth that
 “ God hid the *Messiah* and his Generation
 “ under the Throne of his Glory. upon
 “ which *Satan* said unto God, Lord of the
 “ World what Light is that which lieth
 “ hid under the Throne of thy Glory?
 “ And God said, it is the *Light of the*
 “ *Messiah* and his Generation. Then
 “ *Satan* replied unto God, Lord of the
 “ World permit me and I will oppose
 “ *Messiah* and his Generation. And God,
 “ said thou canst not prevail against him.
 “ And *Satan* answered permit me and
 “ I shall be able. Then said the holy and
 “ blessed God, if you are set upon this at-
 “ tempt, I will destroy you *Satan* out of
 “ the

“ the World, but one of his Generation
 “ will I not suffer to perish : then the holy
 “ and blessed God, began to speak with
 “ the *Mefsiab*, and said to him, O *Mefsiab*
 “ my Just One, they who are hid along
 “ with Thee, are of this Kind, that by
 “ their Sins, they will bring you into great
 “ Affliction. Infomuch that your Eyes
 “ will not endure the Light; and your
 “ Ears will hear great Reproach; and your
 “ Nose will be offended with ill Smells;
 “ and your Mouth will taste Bitterness;
 “ your Tongue will cleave to the Roof of
 “ your Mouth; and your Skin will stick to
 “ your Bones, so that your Courage will
 “ sink in Mourning and Grief. What
 “ therefore will you do? If you are will-
 “ ing to undertake these Things, it will
 “ be well with you; but if not, behold
 “ I will remove them from you. Then *Mef-*
 “ *siab* replied. Lord of the World it is
 “ with Joy that I undertake to suffer all
 “ this Tribulation and Anguish, upon this
 “ Condition, that in my Days you will
 “ bring all the Dead to Life, even all that
 “ have died, from the first *Adam* unto
 “ that

“ that very Time. And not only those
 “ who have died natural Deaths, but those
 “ also who have been devoured by Wolves
 “ and Lions, as well as those that have
 “ been drowned in the Rivers and Seas; and
 “ not those only but also the Abortives;
 “ and not the Abortives only but all those
 “ who according to your omniscient
 “ Knowledge shall be born, and are not
 “ yet born, all those thou shalt save in my
 “ Days. Then said the holy and blessed
 “ God; I consent. And forthwith the *Mes-*
 “ *siah* voluntarily undertook all these
 “ Tribulations and Afflictions as it is writ-
 “ ten in *Isaiah* liii.

It may not therefore be improper to lay
 that whole Passage of the Prophet *Isaiah*,
 which is here referred to before the Rea-
 der; because it is the most ample and par-
 ticular Description of the *Messiah*, that is
 to be found in any one Part of the Old
 Testament. * *How beautifull*, says the
 Prophet, *upon the Mountains are the Feet*
of him that bringeth good Tidings, that pub-
lish

* *Isai* lii. 7, 15. liii. &c.

*lisbeth Salvation, that sayeth unto Zion
thy God reigneth! Behold my Servant
shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted
and extolled and be very high. For he shall
grow up before him (the Lord) as a tender
Plant, and as a Root out of a dry Ground:
He hath no Form or Comeliness: And when
we shall see him, there is no Beauty that
we should desire him. He is despised and
rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows and
acquainted with Grief: and we hid as it
were our Faces from him; he was despised
and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath
born our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows;
Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of
God and afflicted. He was wounded for
our Transgressions, he was bruised for our
Iniquities; the Chastisement of our Peace
was upon him, and with his Bruises we
are healed. All we like Sheep have gone
astray; We have turned every one to his
own way, and the Lord hath laid on him
the Iniquities of us all. He was op-
pressed, and was afflicted, yet he opened
not his Mouth, He is brought as a Lamb to
the Slaughter; and as a Sheep before the
Shecrers*

Sheerers is dumb, so opened he not his Mouth. He was taken from Prison and from Iudgement; and who shall declare his Generation? For he was cut off out of the Land of the living, for the Transgression of my People was he Stricken. And he made his Grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his Death. He did no Evil, neither was any Deceit in his Mouth; yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to Grief. By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for he shall BARE THEIR INIQUITIES. Therefore will I divide him a Portion with the Great; and he shall divide the Spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto Death; and was numbered with the Transgressors, and BARE THE SIN OF MANY, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.

From the before mentioned Words of *R. Abba* it appears, as well as from other clear Testimonies of the best and most learned Rabbins, that the ancient Jews interpret this Chapter of the *Messiah*, and of Consequence that we ought to reject the Evasions

sions of some recent Jews, who forcibly would draw the meaning of this Chapter to represent the whole People of *Israel* in their sufferings. *R. Jonathan* in his Targum on *Isaiah*, lii. ver. 10. expressly names the Person here spoken of and calls him the *Messiah*. *R. Sal. Jarchi* in his comment on the same Passage says, these Words, our Rabbins understand of the *Messiah*. For they say, that the *Messiah* is to be tormented as it is written; *He hath born our Grievs and carried our Sorrow*. To the same Purpose is what is read in the *Midras, Ruth Rabba*, where the Jewish Teachers explain the Words of *Boas* to *Ruth*, *Dip thy Bit in my Vinegar* thus: “ He speaks of the King *Messiah*; Approach thou who art the nearest to thy Kingdom and eat the Bread, viz. the Bread of the Royal Government, and dip thy Bit into the Vinegar; this signifies his Torments as it is said: *He was wounded for our Transgressions and bruised for our Iniquities, the Chastisement our Peace was upon.*”

Now

Now as it is manifest, that this Passage of Scripture which is quoted from *Isaiab*, is by the Jewish Rabbins interpreted of the *Messiah*; it may not be improper to make the following Remarks.

First, That as *Moses* was a Type of the *Messiah* in his § *Prophetical* or Legislative Capacity, so the high Priest under the Mosaical Institution seems to have been instituted as a Type and Figure of the *Messiah*; because the Mosaical high Priest, was, like him, appointed to * *bear the Iniquities of the Sanctuary, and the Iniquity of the Priesthood*. But how was this to be done? Why! By taking the Sins of the Priests and of the People upon himself, and transferring them upon the † Sacrifice, by laying his Hands upon the Head thereof: But the *Messiah*, that true high Priest, shall not be sent to offer up the Blood of Goats and of Calves; but to offer up himself as a Sacrifice for Sin, that in his own Person he may bear their Iniquities.

Secondly,

§ See page 34. * *Num.* xviii. 1. † *Exod.* xxix. 10, 15. *Lev.* i. 4.

Secondly, It may be observed, that as the Mosaical Law was but a temporary one, whereas the Law of the *Messiah* is to be perpetual; so the Mosaical Ceremony of Atonement, was to be renewed once every Year: whereas this Atonement of the *Messiah*, when once made, cannot be renewed. Because, as it is appointed unto Men but once to die, so this Sacrifice of the *Messiah*, can be but once offered: And therefore, the Redemption obtained thereby must be compleat, so as not to stand in Need of any more Sacrifice for Sin. And accordingly the Prophet *Isaiah*, in the aforementioned Passage, asserts, that he was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and says he, *with his Bruises we are healed*. All we like Sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; *and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all*.

R. Salomo in his Comment on *Dan. viii. 14.* says expressly, that the Fruit of this Redemption by the King *Messiah* consists in
the

the Forgiveness of Sin, and that it is to be an everlasting Redemption.

If therefore the Redemption procured by the Sufferings and Death of the *Messiah* is perfect and everlasting, the consequence is, that the Mosaical Offerings are no longer of any Use, and must consequently cease.

And for this Reason it is that according to the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, when the *Messiah* cometh, he * *shall Cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to cease*; as there will be no further Occasion for them. And therefore also the holy *David*, when speaking in the Spirit and in the Character of the *Messiah*, saith, § *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine Eyes hast thou opened: Burnt-offering and Sin-offering hast thou not required: then said I, Lo, I (the Messiah) come; in the volume of the Book it is written of me, that I should fulfill thy Will O my God.*

Now as it is very obvious that the Person, here introduced speaking, is the

E *Messiah*

* *Dan. ix. 27.* § *Psal. xl 6.*

Messiah, who by saying, *Sacrifice and Offering thou didst not desire; Lo, I come*, places himself in Opposition and instead of all Offerings, as that only acceptable pure and great Sacrifice of Atonement, whereof *Isaiah* saith, *The Lord laid on him the Iniquities of us all. He bore the Sin of many. He gave his Life as an Offering for Sin.* So it is remarkable, that although these Offerings for Sin were appointed to procure a Reconciliation between God and the Jews; yet the Lord plainly declares by *David*, that he did not regard these Sacrifices at all, when compared with the Sacrifice of Righteousness offered up by the *Messiah*. For so he says, *Psalms*. li. 16. *Thou desirest no Sacrifice else I would give it thee, thou delightest not in Burnt-offering; Yet he says immediately after, Befavourable to Zion, then shalt thou be pleased with the Sacrifices of Righteousness:* So that it would be Contradicting himself, if *David* in those Words spoke of one and the same Kind of Sacrifices. Whereas, his design is to give his People a View of the Insufficiency of the ordinary, and the
Necessity

Necessity of that extraordinary Sacrifice of Righteousness, which the Lord *Messiah*, our Righteousness, should offer in himself, and thereby sanctify the Souls of his People as living Sacrifices to God. And for this Reason it is, that the High Priesthood of the *Messiah*, is spoken of as superceeding the high Priesthood of the Tribe of *Levi*; because he was not to be of that Tribe, but of the Tribe of *Judah*, nor was, his Power to last only for a Year, or even for Life, but for ever and ever; For thus saith the holy *David*, *The Lord hath Sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck.* Ps. cx. 4.

Lastly, It may be remarked, that it appears manifestly from this Passage of Scripture quoted out of *Isaiab*, that the Sufferings of the *Messiah* are to be in this World, when he comes as the Son of Man; Because he is not to be put in the Possession of his Triumphant Kingdom till after his Death. For says the Prophet: * *Therefore*

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will

* לכן אחלק-לו ברבים ואת-עצומים יחלק שלל
תחת אשר הערה למות גפשו :

Isai. liii. 12.

will I divide him a Portion with the great, and he shall divide the Spoil with the Strong, for this very Reason, because he poured out his Soul unto Death.

But possibly you may object, that this is inconsistent with many Passages in the holy Scriptures where the *Messiah* seems to be promised under the Character of a temporal and a Triumphant Prince, who should restore the Sceptre to *Israel*, and establish the Throne of *David* for ever. Thus for Example the Prophet *Jeremiah*, speaking of the Days of the *Messiah*, saith,
 † *At that time they shall call Jerusalem, the Throne of the Lord, and all Nations shall be gathered unto it: In those Days, the House of Judah shall walk with the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the Land of the North to their own Land.* And the Prophet* *Zechariah* saith, *Thus sayeth, the Lord of Hosts, in those Days it shall come to pass, that ten Men, shall take hold, out of all Languages of the Nations, even shall take hold of the Skirt*

† *Jer.* iii. 17, 18. * *Zeck.* viii. 23.

Skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. And the Prophet *Isaiab*, saith, * *For the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with Songs, and everlasting Joy upon their Heads; they shall obtain Joy and Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall fly away.* And the Prophet *Jeremiab* saith, † *Behold the Day is come, that He will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgement and Justice in the Earth. In his Day Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his Name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, &c.*

And certain it is that there are numberless Places in the holy Writings, which describe the *Messiah* as a mighty Prince; all which are particularly noted by the Jewish Commentators, for as it is a pleasing Subject they have seldom let any of them pass unnoticed. But as it is undoubted on

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* *Iai.* xxxv. 10. † *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. See also *Iai.* iv. 5.

the other Hand, that the *Messiah* is also spoken of in a very different Character, as *a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief*, &c: Therefore these different Descriptions which are given of the *Messiah* by the Prophets, have been the Occasion of some learned Rabbins conjecturing that there were to be two different *Messiahs*; The one, the Son of JOSEPH, and of the Family of *Ephraim*, who is to come in a State of Humiliation and Suffering, and is to be put to Death; The other the Son of DAVID, who is to come in a State of Triumph and Exaltation, and is to bring the former one to Life again. But as this System of two *Messiahs* is contradictory to the Sentiments of several of the more learned Rabbins, who always speak of the *Messiah* in the singular Number; so, as I before observed in my former Letter, doth it seem to be entirely overturned by the express Declarations of the Prophet *Ezekiel*. Who speaking in the Name of God saith, * *I will set up ONE Shepherd over them, even*
my

* *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24.

my Servant David ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And again he saith, And David my Servant shall be King over them, and they shall have ONE Shepherd.

So that it seems more consistent with the Scriptures, and with the Sentiments of the most learned Rabbins, as well as with Reason, to suppose that there is to be but one *Messiah*; and that it will be the same Person, who is to appear first in a state of Humility and Mortification, in order to *bear our Iniquities* and obtain the Redemption of Mankind, that shall afterwards appear in a State of Triumph and of Glory.

But then it may be urged how is this heavenly Kingdom of the *Messiah* consistent with the Promises of restoring the banished Jews both *Judah* and *Israel* to their own Land, and of establishing the Throne of *David* for ever? That there is to be a future Restoration of the Jews to their own Land under the *Messiah* their King is the acknowledged Faith both of Jews and of Christians. And the only difference betwixt them upon this Head is this, that the

Jews imagine this Triumphant Appearance of the Messiah to be at the Time of his first coming upon Earth. But the Christians, as some of the most learned Jewish Rabbins already mentioned certainly did, suppose this Restoration of the Jews to be at the second Appearance of the *Messiah*; when, after his having been put to Death, he shall, at the appointed Time, that is after the Destruction of the Roman Empire, and the entire Overthrow of the City of *Rome* with all its vain Pomp and Pageantry, make a publick Manifestation of his Glory in the Clouds of Heaven attended with Saints and Angels. At which Time he will for the Conviction of Mankind thence descend upon Earth, and shew himself to Men at *Jerusalem* and Mount *Zion*, though not as an earthly Monarch attended with Guards, but as an Heavenly Prince attended by Angels: The Report whereof being spread to all Corners of the World will excite the Curiosity of all those who expect Salvation in *Israel*, and especially of the Jews, to repair to the Land of *Canaan* to see this wonderfull Appearance: and then shall ten Men of all Nations

Nations, among which they inhabited lay hold of the Skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

Which is all manifestly alluded to in the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, under the Emblem of *a Stone that was cut out of a Mountain without Hands*, which smote the Image upon his Feet, which were of Iron and Clay, that is, the Roman Empire, *and brake them to Pieces*. Which Stone the Prophet explains to represent *a Kingdom that the God of Heaven shall set up, which shall never be destroyed; nor shall be left to other People*; that is, in which there shall be no Succession of Princes, For this Kingdom shall be given to * *one like the Son of Man, who shall come in the Clouds of Heaven, and to him shall be given Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, THAT ALL PEOPLE AND NATIONS AND LANGUAGES SHOULD SERVE HIM: Whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom*

* *Dan. vii. 13, 14, 27.*

Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the Kingdom, and Dominion, and Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most high, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom.

Now as it is manifest that this Dominion is to be given to one like the Son of Man, who shall come in the Clouds of Heaven, and that all People and Nations, and Languages shall serve him. Therefore it follows, that this Son of Man must first have died, before he can thus appear in the Clouds of Heaven, and that his Kingdom is not confined to the Seed of *Abraham*, but that all People and Nations, and Languages, will be equally received as the Members of it.

It likewise further appears that this is to be a spiritual Kingdom, the Happiness of which will consist in Righteousness and Peace, and such other Joys as may arise from the restraining, rather than indulging, our Passions. And although it may be allowed that those happy Mortals who are
 alive

alive at that Period of Time, may be pleased and delighted with all those earthly Enjoyments which are consistent with a Life of Purity and Holiness ; Yet it seems inconsistent with the Happiness either of the *Messiah*, or of *Abraham* or *Isaac*, or *Jacob*, or any of the rest of those blessed Spirits, which attend him in this his triumphant Appearance, to imagine them capable of relishing, or being delighted with any of the Enjoyments which this World can afford ; further than their being delighted with seeing and contributing to the Happiness of those Persons who being then alive, shall be converted to, or established in the Acknowledgment of this their *Messiah*, and shall by living agreeably to the Laws of his Kingdom, enjoy all the Happiness that a Life of Righteousness, in the midst of Peace and Plenty can produce upon Earth.

It ought likewise to be further considered, that although the Time of the *Messiah's* coming, is spoken of in the Books of *Moses*, and by the Prophets *Haggai*, *Malachi* and *Daniel*, as being before the Sceptre shall

shall depart from *Judah*, and before the Destruction of the second Temple, yet the Time of his Appearance in a triumphant State, when the final Restauration of the Jews is to take Place, is always spoken of as being at a great distance of Time, *in the latter Times*, and *in the last Days*: And as succeeding after a second and much severer Dispersion and Distress, than what the Jews suffered at *Babylon*, or at any Time before the Destruction of the second Temple. For thus saith the Prophet *Ezekiel* xxxviii. 8. AFTER MANY DAYS thou shalt be visited, IN THE LATTER YEARS, thou shalt come into the Land, that is brought back from the Sword, and that is gathered out of many People, against the Mountains of Israel which have been long waste. And the Prophet *Isaiah* ii. 2. saith, It shall come to pass IN THE LAST DAYS, that the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the Top of the Mountains, and shall be exalted above the Hills; and ALL NATIONS shall flow to it. And in another Place he declares that this Event of the exaltation of the Root of
Jesse

Jesse shall not come to pass till after a second Restoration of the Jews, from a much more violent and general Dispersion than that of *Babylon*, For, saith he, *Isai.* xi. 10, 12. *And it shall come to pass in that Day the Lord shall set his Hand again A SECOND TIME to recover the Remnant of his People, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the Islands of the Sea. And he shall set up AN ENSIGN FOR THE NATIONS, and shall assemble the Outcasts of Israel, and gather together the Outcasts of Judah, from the four Corners of the Earth. And the Prophets * Isaiab and Micah say, † But IN THE LAST DAYS it shall come to pass that the Mountain of the House of the Lord, shall be established in the Top of the Mountains, and it shall be exalted above the Hills, and ALL PEOPLE shall flow unto it; and MANY NATIONS shall come and say, let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord,*

* *Isaiab* iv. 1, 2. † *Isai.* ii. 2, 3.

*Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, he will teach us his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths; for THE LAW shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And saith the Prophet * Jeremiah, Therefore beheld the Day is come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said the Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Israel from the Land of the North, and from all Lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their own Land, that I gave unto their Fathers. Behold I will send for many Fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them, and after I will send for many Hunters and they shall hunt them, from every Hill, and out of the Holes of the Rocks; BUT FIRST I WILL RECOMPENCE THEIR INIQUITY AND THEIR SINS DOUBLE.*

Now notwithstanding all this, such is the Bias of human Nature in Favour of those

* Jerem. xvi. 14, 18.

Sentiments that are pleasing and agreeable to us, that the Bulk of the Nation of the Jews, though they are very assiduous in searching the Scriptures with Regard to the *Messiah*; yet are their Eyes blinded whenever they come to those Passages which described the *Messiah*, even at the Time of his first Appearance, in a State of Abasement, and Humiliation; but are as clear lighted as a Lynx when they came to those Passages which described him under the pleasing Character of a triumphant *Messiah*, of a Prince of the House of *David*, surrounded as they imagine, with worldly Pomp and Grandeur, restoring the Sceptre to *Israel*, and subduing all the Nations of the Earth, as Vassals and Slaves to his Dominion and his Empire.

But alas! How poor, how low in reality is such a Thought? How ill becoming the Dignity of the *Messiah*? Those that expect a *Messiah* or Redeemer, but imagine him to be a great worldly Monarch, who should procure his Subjects many temporal Advan-

Advantages and Privileges, know not wherein the Misery or the Happiness of human Nature and immortal Souls properly consists, or else they could not form such wrong Notions. A powerful King and victorious Heroe may establish great Empires; and in proportion to the Capacity of his Understanding, may introduce many good Laws, and Regulations, for the outward Prosperity of his Subjects; but to make a solid Reformation in the Hearts, Lives and Manners of his People, he sometimes has not the Will, and infinitely more often wants the Power. Many of the *Assyrian, Persian, Grecian* and *Roman* Monarchs have subdued and ruled over the best Part of the World, but the Bodies of the conquered Nations are become Sacrifices either to Death or Slavery, and their Souls they left as miserable and unreformed as they found them. And shall our *Messiah* be only such an *Anointed one* as *Nebucadnezzar*, or *Cyrus*, or *Alexander*, or *Cæsar*? Far be such a Thought from our Minds. What is there

there in worldly Grandeur that is worthy of his Pursuit? Or what is there in worldly Grandeur that is worthy of our own Sollicitude? Do we find that the greatest Heroes have either been the best or the happiest of Men? No! but rather the Contrary.

Let us look into the Promise made unto *Abraham*, when * *the Lord said shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him?* Was this designed as a Blessing or a Curse? Surely as a Blessing, because the Almighty adds, *For I know that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgement, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

And now let us enquire how this Blessing hath been fulfilled. Not long after the Death of *Abraham*, his seed were sent into *Egypt*, to remain in slavery till 430

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Years

* Gen. xviii. 17, 19.

Years were expired; from whence they were at length delivered; and were conducted into *Canaan*, after wandering 40 Years more in the Wilderness of *Sinai*. And when they were arrived in the Land of *Canaan*, yet the Inhabitants of the Land which remained unconquered, || *were Pricks in their Eyes, and Thorns in their Sides: And continued to be * Snares and Traps unto them, and Scourges in their Sides, and Thorns in their Eyes untill they perished off that good Land, which the Lord had given them.* And in the Days of their Glory, even when *Solomon* was King, what was the Extent of his Kingdom? Not the Size of a Roman Province. Not the hundred Part of what is now possessed by the Successors of *Mahomed*. And immediately after the Death of *Solomon*, ten of the twelve Tribes withdrew their Allegiance from his Offspring, and not long after that were sent Captives into *Media*, whence they have never yet returned; and the remaining two Tribes have been

|| *Num.* xxxiii. 55. * *Josh.* xxiii. 13.

been driven out of the Land of *Canaan* about 1700 Years ago, and remain as Pilgrims and Strangers over the Face of the whole Earth. And can any Worldly Grandeur that is to happen in the Process of Time, to any of the future Progeny of *Abraham*, make what hath hither to passed, a Blessing to *Abraham* and his Seed? can it make an Amends to those who are in the Grave? Or can the Conquest of the whole World by one of the Seed of *Abraham*, and the Subduing of all Nations under the Dominion of *Zion*, be any great Blessing to those Nations, if they are to reap no Benefits thereby but being in Subjection to the *Jews*?

Whereas if we consider that the Reason, why God was pleased to distinguish *Abraham*, was, because he *knew that he would command his Children and his Household after him, to keep the Way of the Lord to do Justice and Judgement*; So we may conclude from thence, that the Reformation of Mankind; the teaching of them to do Justice and Judgement; and to do the will of God in this World, as it is done in

Heaven, and thereby preparing them for a State of Bliss and Happiness in another World; the setting them an Example in his own Person, of the little Value which ought to be put upon the glittering Follies and the pompous Parade of this Life; and lastly, in order to defeat the Designs of Satan, the suffering of Persecution, and Scourging, and Death, that by his Wounds they may be healed, and that on him may be laid the Iniquities of us all; is an Employment worthy the *Messiah*.

And when this is done, and the Time shall be fulfilled when the wrath of God is appeased for the Indignities offered this his faithfull Messenger of the Covenant; Then for this *Messiah*, by a second Coming, to manifest his Conquest over that old Serpent the Devil which beguiled our first Parents, by opening the Gates of Death, which have hitherto been fast Sealed, so that no Man cometh again; and after a Triumphant Appearance in the Clouds of Heaven attended by *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Saints, which have died in Expectation of this Redemption; to descend

descend from thence upon Earth, and shew himself to Men, in order to convince all Mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, of his being their *Messiah*, may be Actions worthy that Person, whom God hath been pleased to dignify with the Appellation of * *his Son*.

And in order to accomplish this, there is no Necessity that the Person who does it, should be a Worldly King, and a Conqueror, but rather the Contrary.

The *Messiah* therefore, who was not sent upon his own Account, to enjoy the things of this Life, is described as coming, not in such a Station or Condition of Life, as should furnish him with the Opportunity of enjoying the Prosperity and Grandeur of this World; for he despiseth it, and is therefore to be despised of it; but he is to come to † *bring glad Tidings to Zion, that all the the Ends of the Earth might see the Salvation of God*. And though he shall be *exalted and be very high* in the Kingdom appointed for him by his God

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and

* 2 Sam. vii. 14. Psal. ii. 7. † Isai. lii. 7, 10, 13. y. liii. 2, 4.

and our God ; yet here in this World at his first coming, he hath *no Form nor Comeliness, no Beauty that we should desire him. A Man of Sorrows and acquainted with Grief, Stricken of God and afflicted; and cut off out of the Land of the living for the Transgression of the People.*

Here is an Image of Godlike Virtue, of Meekness, and unbounded Benevolence ; an Image that might make an Impression upon such as are like-minded ; on such as by raising their Thoughts above this World can look down upon it, and all its transitory, short, surfeiting Enjoyments with Pity and Contempt. While on the contrary they whose Minds are set upon the Pleasures of this Life, who are intoxicated with Pride, or Luxury, or Ambition, can form to themselves no Notion of any *Messiah*, but of one that cometh attended with Conquest and Triumph, and all the gilded Pageantry of worldly Pomp and Grandeur.

And yet it was this, in all human Probability, which prevented your Ancestors from acknowledging this *Messiah*, this humble, this meek, this despised and rejected

jected *Messiah*, when he appeared amongst them. Their Minds were set upon a triumphant *Messiah*, their Expectations were raised with the Thoughts of worldly Grandeur; their Eyes were lifted high to look for some stately Cedar, while with their Feet they trampled on this humble Plant. Not that he will not Triumph! But it shall not be with worldly Pomp and Parade. Not that he will not be exalted, and extolled, and be very high! For he will be *higher than the Kings of the Earth*. But his Exaltation will be in Heaven, where Exaltation is worth striving for, and where according to the holy * *David, because he loved Righteousness, and hated Iniquity, God, even his God, hath ANOINTED him with the Oyl of Gladness above his Fellows*. And it was for this very Reason that God hath exalted him, because he was humble, and lowly, and meek, was tormented for our Transgressions, bruited for our Iniquities, and was cut off out of the Land

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of

* *Pf. xlv. 7.*

of the living for the Transgression of the People. And in this exalted State he shall appear again upon Earth, and shew himself in the fullness of Time to those who are then alive, for their Conviction and Conversion; attended, not like a worldly Monarch, with Guards and Troops of armed Men, but with Saints and Angels, and the Souls of just Men made perfect. And his Appearance shall be at *Jerusalem* and on *Mount Sion*; * *At which Time* according to the Prophet *Jeremiah*, they shall call *Jerusalem* the *Throne of the Lord*, and ALL NATIONS shall be gathered unto it. In those Days the *House of Judah* shall walk with the *House of Israel*, and they shall come together out of the *Land of the North* to their own *Land*. For says the Prophet *Isaiab*, † *The Lord shall comfort Zion*, he will comfort all her waste Places; he will make her *Wilderness* like *Eden*, and her *Desert* like the *Garden of the Lord*: Joy and Gladness shall be found therein,
 Thanks

* *Jer.* iii. 17, 18. † *Isai.* li. 3. and compare with *Ezek.* xxxvi. 22.

Thanksgiving and the Voice of Melody.
 And again God saith, * *It shall be to me a Name of Joy, a Praise, and an Honour before all the Nations of the Earth, which shall hear all the Good that I do unto them, and they shall fear and tremble for all the Goodness, and for all the Prosperity that I procure unto it. Thus saith the Lord, again there shall be heard in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jerusalem, the Voice of Joy, and the Voice of Gladness, the Voice of the Bridegroom, and the Voice of the Bride, the Voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of Hosts, for the Lord is good and his Mercy endureth forever.*

But they who would see this Day must first acknowledge him as their *Messiah* in his depressed State; they who would reign with him in Glory, must also share with him in his Humility; they who would partake with him in his State of Exaltation, must first lift under his Banner in his State of Abasement.

It seems therefore a Matter of the greatest Consequence to all Mankind, whether

* *Jerem. xxxiii. 9, 11.*

whether Jew or Gentile, to be as well informed as they possibly can of the Time affixed for the coming of the Messiah: That they may be certified whether he is yet come or not, either in his State of Abasement or Exaltation; that, if he be come, they may acknowledge him, and not be ejected out of his Kingdom, when he shall appear in his triumphant State, because they were too proud in Heart to acknowledge him in his State of Humiliation; wherefore I shall endeavour to lay this before you in as an impartial a Light as I am capable of.

In doing of which I shall, in order to avoid Confusion, first enquire into those Texts of Scripture, which may inform us concerning the Time of the Coming of this *Messiah*; whence we may be enabled to Judge whether he is yet come or not: And if he be come, whether we have not Reason to expect a further and second Appearance of the *Messiah* upon Earth. For though I apprehend it to be contradictory to the whole Tenor of the Hebrew Bible to suppose two *Messiahs*, yet I think it will appear

pear from many Texts of Scripture, that the *Messiah* must be already come; and as it is undoubted that many of the Prophecies concerning his Personal Appearance here upon Earth, are not yet fulfilled, it will as manifestly follow from thence, that his further Coming is still to be expected. I shall then in the last Place, endeavour to shew who this Person is, that is affirmed by the Christians to have already appeared under this Character of the *Messiah*; and shall assign my Reasons in Vindication of their Opinion.

Now if we consult those Texts of Scripture, which relate to the Time of the *Messiah's* Coming, we shall find, that the *Messiah* was to come before the Sceptre should depart from *Judah*; and before the second Temple of *Jerusalem*, which was built by *Zorobabel*, should be destroyed; both which Events having come to pass long ago, it is more than probable, that the first coming of the *Messiah* is long since past. As to the first of these, This I think will sufficiently appear from consulting the Prophecy of *Jacob*, when a
little

little before his Death, he gave his Blessing to his Sons, and among the rest to his Son *Judah*, out of whose Tribe by the Seed of *David*, it is sufficiently acknowledged by the Jews, that the *Messiah* is to come. For says he, * *The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until § SHILOH come; and to him shall the Gathering of the People be.* Now as it is manifest, that *the Sceptre*, take it in what sense you will, whether it be the Sceptre of Government in *Judah* as a Tribe, or the Sceptre of the great Synagogue, or the Sceptre of the *Shanedrim*, which sat in *Jerusalem*, and within the limits of the Tribe of *Judah*, all which ceased much about the same Time; since I say it is manifest that this Sceptre hath long since departed from *Judah*, therefore it is reasonable to believe that *Shiloh* is come. And in Proof of this, I think I need only quote the Words of *R. Rachman*, who makes this remarkable Confession: “ When
“ our Sanhedrim went out of the Hall,
“ where

* Gen. xlix. 10.

§ שילה.

“ where they used to have their Meetings,
 “ and the Power of Judgment was taken
 “ from them, they put on hairy Garments,
 “ tore their Hair off their Heads and said;
 “ Woe unto us, The Sceptre is departed
 “ from *Judah*, and the Son of *David* is
 “ not come.”

But as it may very justly be demanded
 how it appears that the *Messiah* is here
 meant by this *Shiloh*, I think myself
 obliged to produce my Reasons for it;
 because I am not ignorant, that in order
 to avoid this Construction of the Word
Shiloh, the Jews have interpreted this
 Text after many and various manners. My
 Reasons therefore are these, First, because
 it is acknowledged by the Jewish Rabbins
 that the *Messiah*, is to be born without an
 earthly Father. For thus you may find it
 in the Annotations of *R. Moses Hadarson*,
 on *Psal. lxxxv. 11. Truth shall spring out*
of the Earth, and Righteousness shall look
down from Heaven. Where he observes
 “ That *R. Joden* says, That is our Salva-
 “ tion which shall Spring out of the Earth
 “ by

“ by the Interposition of God; and these
 “ two, that is Truth and Justice shall be
 “ joyned together. And why does the
 “ Psalmist say, it shall spring out of the
 “ Earth, and not say it shall be born? Be-
 “ cause its Birth and Generation shall not
 “ be like the Generation of worldly Crea-
 “ tures but shall be different from it, and be
 “ without a social Conjunction (*i. e.* of
 “ male and Female) and this just one shall
 “ be our Saviour whom God will send.
 “ Which is alluded to in the same *Psal.* v.
 “ 12. where it is said, *yea the Lord shall*
 “ *give that which is good; and our Land*
 “ *shall yeild her Encrease.* For it is mani-
 “ fest that no one knows, or can tell, what
 “ shall be the Name of his Father, until
 “ he himself shall come, and make it mani-
 “ fest unto us.”

And again in his Annotations on *Gen.*
xxxvii. 22. And Reuben said unto unto
them, shed no Blood, but cast him into this
Pit that is in the Wildernefs, and lay no
hand upon him. “ Thus, says he, it is
 “ also said in *Job* vi. 27. *Yea ye over-*
 “ *whelm*

“ *whelm* THE FATHERLESS, and you dig
 “ a Pit for your Friend. Which is also
 “ alluded to *Lament. v. 3. We are Or-*
 “ *phans and Fatherless.* Upon which *R.*
 “ *Barachias* remarks, that the holy and
 “ blessed God said to *Israel*, ye have com-
 “ plained unto me that ye are Orphans and
 “ Fatherless; So shall the Redeemer, which
 “ I will appoint, and raise up from among
 “ yourselves, be without a Father also.”

As therefore, the Promise made to *Eve*
 that the Seed of the Woman should bruise
 the Serpents Head, is acknowledged by the
 most ancient and learned Rabbins to refer
 to the *Messiah*, and as according to the
 aforementioned Traditions, the *Messiah* is
 to be born without an Earthly Father, He
 may very properly be denoted by the par-
 ticular Characteristic of *the Seed of the*
Woman. And as the Word *Shil* or *Shilo* in
 Hebrew literally signifies, the *Secondina*, or
 Tunicle, in which the Fætus is involved
 in the Mothers Womb, therefore this is a
 very proper Expression to denote the Off-
 spring of a Virgin, which was to be pro-
 duced without the help of Man; In the
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Incarnation of whose exalted Spirit, there is no more Mystery than in the Incarnation of the Spirit of the meanest Man alive; the Difficulty being to conceive, not how a Spirit of an exalted Nature, but how any Spirit at all can be united to Matter and made Man. And indeed it is very remarkable that there is no mention made in the Scriptures of the Father of the *Messiah* from the Time of *David*.

Secondly, it ought to be applied to the *Messiah*, because the following Words, and *and to him shall the Gathering of the People be*, seems to appropriate it to him; as this is a very remarkable Part of the Character by which the *Messiah* is denoted in the Scriptures. For to this Purpose was the Original Promise made to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, that in their Seed should *all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*. And accordingly the Prophet * *Isaiah*, when speaking of the *Messiah*, saith, *He will lift up an ENSIGN TO THE NATIONS from far, and call unto them from the Ends*

* *Ijai* v. 26. xi. 10, 12.

Ends of the Earth. And in another Place he saith, *And in that Day there shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall stand FOR AN ENSIGN TO THE PEOPLE, and to it shall THE GENTILES Seek.* And again, *And he shall set up AN ENSIGN FOR THE NATIONS, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four Corners of the Earth.* With numberless other Places to the same Purpose; all which amount to just the same thing, with that which is here predicted of *Shiloh* by Jacob, that *to him, or under his Ensign, shall the Gathering of the People be.*

And lastly we apply this Word *Shiloh* to the *Messiah*, because it hath been already applied so, by the most ancient and learned Rabbins among the Jews.

For thus we find this verse interpreted in the *Jerusalem Targum*, as well as in the Targums of *Jonathan B. Uziel*, and of *Onkelos*, than which there is not better Authority among any of the Jewish writers. The *Jerusalem Targum* renders

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it thus. * *There shall not be wanting Kings of the House of Judah, nor skillful Doctors of the Law from among his Sons Sons, until the Time that the King Messiah cometh, whose is the Kingdom, and to him at length shall all the Kings of the Earth be subject.*

§ The Targum of Jonathan renders it thus. *There shall not fail to be Kings and Presidents of the House of Judah, nor Scribes teaching the Law out of his Seed, until the Time that the King Messiah, who is the younger of his Sons, cometh; and for him shall the People melt, or pine.*

|| The Targum of Onkelos, renders it thus, *Their shall not be removed a Prince from*

* לא פסקין מלכין מדבית יהודה אפ לא סברין מלפי אוריתא מבני בנוי עד זמן דייתי מלכא משיחא דדידיה היא מלכותא וליה עתידין רישתעבדין כל מלכותא דארעא :
§ לא יפור : לא פסקין מלכין ושליטין מדבית יהודה וספרין טאלפי אוריתא מורעיה עד זמן דייתי מלכא משיחא זעיר בנוי ובריליה יתימסון עממא :

|| לא יעדי עבד שולטן מדבית יהודה וספרא מבני בנוהי עד-עלמא עד-דייתי משיחא דדילית היא מלכותא גליה ישתמעון עממא :

from the House of Judah, nor a Scribe from his Sons Sons, until the Time when THE MESSIAH cometh, to whom appertaineth the Kingdom, and him shall the People obey.

Which is also the Opinion of several others Jewish Rabbins, for to the same Purpose you may find this very Text explained in *Beresbith Ketenna*. And in *Beresbith Rabba*, this Text is explained thus. “ *The Sceptre shall not depart, &c.* “ that is till the King *Messiah* comes who “ is to break the Kingdoms with a Rod, “ as it is said in *Psal. ii. 9. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in Pieces like a Potters Vessel.* Then follows, “ *Nor a Law-Giver from between his Feet.* This “ also alludes to *Messiah* the King, who “ shall come to tread them under his Feet. “ As it is said by the Prophet, *Isai. xxvi. 6. The Foot shall tread it down, even the Foot of the POOR.* Because that “ *Messiah* of whom these things are spoken “ shall be *Poor*, according to the Prophecy of the Prophet *Zechar. ix. 9. Where*

" he says, *Behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and, having Salvation,*
 " **LOWLY, AND RIDING UPON AN ASS.**
 And upon the Words *until Shilo comes,* the same Commentator positively says, *that is the Messiah.* And in the *Jewish German Translation* of the *Hebrew Bible*, which is made and approved of by their ablest Masters, they have likewise translated the Word *Shiloh* by the King *Messiah*, but have interpreted the *Hebrew* Particles עֵינִי *when*, which is against the Nature and Signification of the *Hebrew* Language, עֵינִי never in the *Hebrew Bible* being used for *when*, but signifying always *until*: In which Sense it is manifest that all the *Chaldee* Paraphrasts before quoted undoubtedly understood it; because they expressly render it by עַד-עֹלָמָא or עַד-זְמַן which cannot otherwise be render'd than *to the Age* or *to the Time*, and not *from the Age* or *from the Time* when the *Messiah* cometh.

But it is further also manifest that the *Messiah* is already come, not only because the Sceptre hath manifestly departed from *Judah*, but also because it is predicted of him

him that he should come in about 490 Years after the first Temple was ordered to be rebuilt, and before the Destruction of the second Temple which was erected in the Place thereof. For says the Prophet Daniel, * *Seventy Weeks are determined upon the People, and upon thy holy City, to finish the Transgression, and to make an End of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to seal up the Vision and Prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the Commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven Weeks, and threescore and two Weeks, the Street shall be built again, and the Wall in troublous Times. And after threescore and two Weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. And THE PEOPLE OF THE PRINCE THAT SHALL COME, shall destroy the City and Sanctuary, and the End thereof shall be with a Flood, and unto the End*

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of

* Dan. ix. 24, 27.

of the War Desolations are determined, (and he shall confirm the Covenant with many for one Week; and in the midst of the Week he shall cause the Sacrifice and the Oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of Abomination, he shall make it desolate) even until the Consummation; and that determined shall be poured on the desolate.

Some eminent Rabbins allow that this Prophecy of *Daniel* points to the *Messiah*: *Abarbanel* in his Book * *Majene Jeschua* in the Explanation of the Words *To anoint the most Holy* says, The most Holy signifies, either the Holy Place in the Temple, or the *Messiah* our Righteousness, who is called the most Holy because he is better and holier than all the People of *Israel* together. To the same Purpose is the Testimony of R. *Asariah* in his Book § *Meor Enaim* where instead of the Words to bring in everlasting Righteousness, he says, *to bring in the Messiah our Righteousness*. R. *Saadias* and *Aben Esra* in their Explications

* Fol. lxiv. Col. i. ii. § Fol. cxxx. Edit. Mark.

ons on this Place likewise insist upon it that the 70 Weeks signify 490 Years.

And indeed this Prophecy of *Daniel* agrees so exactly with the Description of the *Messiah* as given us in his State of Humiliation by the Prophet * *Isaiah*, and points out so precisely the Time of his being *cut off*, that is, before the Destruction of the second Temple, which lasted about 490 Years or *seventy Weeks of Years*, from the Time that the Commandment went forth to rebuild it ; that some *Jews* who are unwilling to acknowledge a suffering *Messiah* as well as a triumphant one, or that he is already come in the Flesh ; have made it an Objection, in order to invalidate the Force of this Testimony, that in their Bible *Daniel* is not plac'd among the Prophets, but only among the Hagiographa.

It may therefore not be improper, before we proceed further, to enquire into the Authority upon which the acknowledgment of the Authenticity of the Prophecies of *Daniel*, and particularly of this

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Prophecy

* *Iai.* liii.

Prophecy which I have now quoted, is founded. Of which we cannot have better Evidence than from the Testimony of the *Jewish* Historian *Josephus*, who lived at the Time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Titus Vespasian*; who quotes the Prophecies of *Daniel* as written by a Person divinely inspired; and refers his Reader to them, as being at that Time a part of the Canon of the *Jewish* Scriptures, For says he, * *He will find them in the sacrea Writings*. And in the following Chapter, where *Josephus* is giving an Abstract of the Prophecies of *Daniel*, he commends his Writings, which were much read among the *Jews*, and says:

“ But it is fit to give an Account of what
 “ this Man did, which it is most admirable
 “ to hear. For he was so happy, as to
 “ have strange Revelations made to him,
 “ and those as to one of the greatest of the
 “ Prophets. Infomuch that while he was
 “ alive, he had the Esteem and Applause
 “ both of the Kings and of the Multitude;
 “ and

* εὐρήσκει δὲ τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς γράμμασι *Joseph.*
Ant. L. x. C. x.

“ and now he is dead he retains a Remem-
 “ brance that will never fail. For the fe-
 “ veral Books that he wrote, and left be-
 “ hind him, are still read by us, till this
 “ Time. And from them we believe that
 “ *Daniel* conversed with God. For he did
 “ not only prophesy future Events, as did
 “ the other Prophets; but he also deter-
 “ mined the Time of their Accomplish-
 “ ment. And then recapitulating the Pur-
 port of *Daniel's* Prophecies with regard to
 those things which happened to the Na-
 tion of the Jews under *Antiochus Epi-*
phanes as contained in the eighth chap-
 ter of *Daniel*, he saith. “ And indeed it
 “ came to pass, that our Nation suffered
 “ these Things under *Antiochus Epiphan-*
 “ *es*, according to *Daniel's* Vision, which
 “ he wrote many Years before they came
 “ to pass. In the very same Manner *Daniel*
 “ also wrote concerning the Roman Go-
 “ vernment; and that our Country should
 “ be made desolate by them, alluding
 “ thereby to the forementioned Prophecy,
 which I have quoted out of the Ninth
 Chapter of *Daniel* : And then he adds,
 “ All

“ All these Things did this Man leave in
 “ Writing, as God had shewed them to him.
 “ Infomuch that such as read his Prophe-
 “ cies, and see how they have been ful-
 “ filled, would wonder at the Honour
 “ wherewith God honoured *Daniel*.

Here then is an incontestable Proof of the
 acknowledgement of the Divine Inspiration
 of *Daniel*, by one of the most learned Per-
 sons of the Jewish Nation, who declares
 himself convinced of the Truth of that Pro-
 phetical Spirit with which he was inspired
 by the wonderful Accomplishment of his
 Prophecies; and particularly appeals to that
 Prophecy which I have quoted, as having
 been fulfilled in the Destruction of the
 Temple and City of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*:
 It being after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*,
 that he wrote his History, as appears from
 his own Words, in that Part of his Works
 wherein he wrote an Account of his own
 Life. †

Hence

† *Jos.* vit. Sect. lxxv. In this History Josephus
 also speaks honourably of Jesus, and it is asserted by
 some that he died a Christian. See *Whiston's* Dissert. on
 Josephus:

Hence also appears what was the Opinion of *Josephus* with Regard to the Interpretation of this Prophecy. As 1st, that he looked upon the 70 Weeks Prophesied of by *Daniel* to have been some Time expired: and secondly that by the Expression of *the People of the Prince that should come*, he understood the Roman Army. And therefore, though he was unwilling to speak out, as being a Cautious Writer, and very wary in not offending either the *Jews* or the *Romans*, yet since it is plain that this part of that Prophecy was fulfilled, it must appear as plain to any one else who consults the Words of the Prophecy, that the *Messiah*, according to the Remainder of the Prophecy, was to have been cut off before the Prince of the People, or the Roman Army, should come to destroy the City and the Sanctuary.

Now if the *Jews* will but consult their own Copies of the Hebrew Bible they will find there were four Commandments issued out to restore and rebuild *Jerusalem*,* one
by

* *Exra* i. 1.

by *Cyrus*, * another by *Darius*, the † third by *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, in the seventh Year of his Reign, and † the fourth by the same Prince in the twentieth Year of his Reign. And let us take which of these they please, and suppose these Weeks, instead of Weeks of Days, to denote, according to the Explanation of the Prophet § *Ezekiel*, Weeks of Years; and it is manifest that the *Messiah* must be long since come. So that there is no need of a critical Enquiry into every minute Circumstance of this Prophecy to shew that the *Messiah* should be already come.

But it is not only manifest from this Prophecy of *Daniel*, but also from the Prophets *Haggai* and *Malachi* that the *Messiah* was to come before the Destruction of the Temple of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*. For thus saith the Prophet *Haggai*, when Speaking of this second Temple that was Built by *Zerubabel*; || *Who is left among you, that saw this House in her first Glory? And how do you see it now? Is it not in your Eyes*

* Ez. vi. 1. † Ez. vii. 1. 26. § *Nehem.* ii. 1, 3, 6. v. 14. || *Ezek.* iv. 6.

Eyes in Comparison of it as Nothing? Yet now be Strong, O Zerubabel, saith the Lord, and be Strong O Joshua the Son of Josedec the High Priest, and be Strong ye People of the Land, saith the Lord, and work: For I am with you saith the Lord of Hosts; according to the Word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the Heavens, and the Earth, the Sea, and the dry Land: And I will shake all Nations, AND THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS SHALL COME, AND I WILL FILL THIS HOUSE WITH GLORY, saith the Lord of Hosts. The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts. THE GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN THE FORMER, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this Place will I give Peace saith the Lord.

which Text though the modern Jews endeavour to apply otherwise, yet it is plain that some of the most learned of the
Jews

Jews quoted in the *Talmud* applied it to the Days of the *Messiah*; for thus you will clearly find it asserted under the Title *Shanedrim* Section *Helec*, where R. *Akiba* is said to have expounded these Words yet *a little while and I will shake the Heavens and the Earth*, of the Days of *Messiah* the King, and of the Time that was to succeed between the Destruction of the first Temple, and the coming of the *Messiah*.

For if this House which was built by *Zerubabel*, which, with regard to the Materials and outward Ornaments that composed it, with regard to the Silver and Gold expended on it, was as Nothing in Comparison to the former House; and which according to the Conceptions of the *Jews* themselves, wanted five honourable Marks of the divine Favour, which were in the first Temple; viz. The Ark of the Testimony, the Holy Fire, the Holy Oil, and the Urim and Thummim; If this House, I say, was yet to exceed the former House in Glory, to what can the preferable Excellency of this latter House
be

be attributed, but to this, *that the Desire of all Nations was to fill it with Glory?* And if no better Reason can be assigned, does not this prove to a Demonstration that *the Desire of all Nations*, that is, *the Messiah* in whom they are all to be blessed, should come before the Destruction of this second Temple?

And accordingly the Prophet * *Malachi*, who was the last Prophet that was sent to the *Jews*, when speaking of this second Temple, declares in the Name of God, saying, *Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the Way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple; even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in: Behold he shall come saith the Lord of Hosts.* Which Passage of Scripture is by *R. Moses Maimonides* in his *Hilcoth Melachim* positively applied to the *Messiah*. Where he Says that “ in the
 “ Days of *Messiah* the King the Genealogy
 “ of *Israel* shall be revealed at his Mouth
 “ by the holy Spirit that shall rest upon
 “ him, as it is said in *Malachi*. iii. *Behold*
 “ *I will*

* Mal. cxi. 1

I will send my Messenger and he shall prepare the way before me. R. Kimchi in his Comment upon this Passage Says also, This Lord whom ye seek, is the King *Messiah*, and he is also the *Angel of the Covenant*.

Whereas if the *Messenger* or *Angel*, of the *Covenant* made with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, and *David*, was to come to this Temple, his coming must certainly have been before that Temple was destroyed. Which is still further confirmed by a Tradition mentioned in the *Talmud* which I have before quoted in my first Letter: Where it is said that this World is to last 6000 Years which are subdivided into three Periods, two thousand of which are reckoned the Days of *Inanity* or *Emptiness*, two thousand the Days of the *Law*, and two thousand the Days of the *Messiah*. Whence it appears that the *Messiah* ought to have come when this World was about four thousand Years old; and about which Time it is certain that the second Temple was destroyed, the *Jews* driven out of *Judea*, dispersed over the Face of the whole Earth, and thereby an
End

End put to the Possibility of their Compliance with the ceremonial Parts of the Law of *Moses*. All which Considerations when put together seem to have extorted the Confession of some of the eminent *Rabbins* in the *Talmud*; that the *Messiah* ought to have been come long ago. For thus you may find it mentioned under the Head *Shanedrim* that R. *Raf* hath said, *all the appointed Times*, i. e. for the coming of the *Messiah*, *are at an End*. Upon which Account it probably is that the Modern *Rabbins* discourage all Enquiries into the Scriptures in Relation to the Time of the Coming of the *Messiah*, and answer those that are inquisitive about it, with telling them *it is a secret*, or hidden, *Thing*.

And here I cannot but remark that it hath been often observed of the Papists, that, in their Disputes with the Protestants, they are apt to make Objections against Quotations out of the Scriptures, under Pretence of their *Obscurity*. And why is this? But because the Scriptures make against them. And may we not suppose that it is for the same Reason, that the modern Rab-

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bins discourage all Enquiries into the Scriptures concerning the Times predicted for the coming of the *Messiah*, and answer the Enquirers with *Sathum hu?* I leave the Reply to the Dictates of your own Conscience.

I beseech you therefore Sir, to consider that, when the first Temple, which was built by *Solomon* was destroyed by *Nebucadnezzar*, and it pleased God to visit the *Jews* with a Captivity of seventy Years duration, the Reason assigned for it is this; * *All the Cities of the Priests, and the People transgressed very much, AFTER ALL THE ABOMINATION OF THE HEATHEN, and polluted the House of the Lord, which he had hallowed in in Jerusalem. And the Lord God sent to them by the Hands of his Messengers, rising up by Times and sending; because he had Compassion on his People, and on his Dwelling Place, but THEY MOCKED THE MESSENGERS OF GOD, AND DESPISED HIS WORDS, AND MISUSED HIS PROPHETS,*

* 2. Chron. xxxvi. 14, 21.

PHETS, *until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, and there was no Healing, &c.*

Where it may be observed that here are two Reasons assigned for Gods Displeasure against the *Jews* at that Time, and that is, First, their having *transgressed after the Abomination of the Heathen*; and Secondly their having *mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets*. Whereas the *Jews* as they are far from being Idolaters at present, or from giving any Encouragement, or even Countenance, to Idolatry: So were they at the Time of the Destruction of the second Temple by *Titus*, very far from *Transgressing after the Abomination of the Heathen*. What Reason then can be assigned why their present Desolation should be so much more grievous than their former one; even a Desolation that hath already continued above seventeen hundred Years, but this? That they mocked the Messenger of God, even *the Messenger of the Covenant*, a Messenger of more eminent Note than any which had been sent

to them under the first Covenant; and therefore their Punishment is so much the more grievous.

For let us suppose this Messenger was the *Messiah*; if then this Prophet was *misused*, was *despised* and *rejected*, and *cut off out of the Land*, by your Ancestors, because he did not appear in the Form of a triumphant Prince and a Conqueror, in all the Pomp which worldly-minded Persons had painted him in agreeably to their own Imaginations; and then I beseech you O ye Sons of *Israel* to consider, whether your long, whether your tedious Desolation is not to be accounted for?

This is a Subject I do not care to dwell upon, my Desire being to convince not to irritate; let us however consider that if these Things be evident, if these Quotations which I have produced out of the Scriptures and out of the Comments of the most learned *Jews* thereon, as well as out of the *Talmud*, be true; whether it doth not rest upon the *Jews* to shew that the *Messiah* is already come according to the Time fixed by those Prophecies; least the
Sons

Sons of *Philistia* should triumph, and the Unbelievers in Revelation should say, that the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible have no Truth in them?

Nothing I think can be more plain than that the Scriptures have declared, that the *Messiah* shall appear before the Sceptre should depart from *Judah*, as well as before the destruction of the second Temple: But the Sceptre hath manifestly departed long since from *Judah*; and the second Temple hath been destroyed above 1700 Years ago, and if no *Messiah* hath yet appeared, either in a State of Triumph, or of Mortification, how is the Veracity of those Prophecies to be vindicated?

I am very sensible that it is said in Answer thereto by some of the modern Jews, that the Promises made in those Scriptures were only conditional, and that God on account of the Wickedness of the Jews hath put off, and postponed the Time of sending the *Messiah*, and deferred it to a further Season; so that although he hath * *Visited*

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their

* See *Psal.* lxxxiix.

their Transgressions with a Rod: Nevertheless that he will not utterly take his Mercy from them, nor suffer his Faithfulness to lie; but will in the End most assuredly establish the Covenant which he made unto David.

Which Supposition, of Gods postponing the Time of sending the *Messiah*, might possibly have had some Force, had it not been attended with two very unfortunate Circumstances. One of which is, that the Matter of Fact on which it is founded is not true; and the other is, that if it was true the Consequence here deduced from that Matter of Fact would not follow.

As to the Matter of Fact, that the Jews were so much more wicked at or about the Time, when *Judaea* was reduced into the form of a Roman Province, that is, when the Sceptre departed from *Judah*, than they had been formerly, that God upon that account might have postponed sending the *Messiah*, this I say is not true. Because it appears from the whole History of the Hebrew Bible, that those Wickednesses for which the Wrath of God was incensed

incensed against the *Jews* as a Nation, were their Idolatry, and the ill Treatment which the Prophets whom God sent to reclaim them from thence, met with at their Hands: Whereas the Jewish Church was never purer than at the Time of the *Macca-bes*; and for some Time before the Reduction of *Judea* into the Form of a Roman Province, the *Jews* were no more given to Idolatry, than they are at present; but on the contrary were so averſe to any thing of that Kind, that when * *Herod* the great for the Entertainment of *Cæſar* had instituted ſome Sports, and built a Theatre, he had like to have occaſioned a Rebellion only by having ſome Ornaments erected, which looked like the Images of Men. And as to their Behaviour with Regard to their Prophets, it is manifeſt that after the Death of *Malachi*, they had no Opportunity of uſing them ill, he being the laſt Prophet which the preſent *Jews* will acknowledge to have been in *Iſrael*; and therefore the Matter of Fact itſelf, of

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the

* *Joſeph. Ant. L. 15. c. viii. S. 1, 2.*

the great Wickedness of the *Jews* at that Time, is not true.

Bur if it had, the Consequence to be deduced from thence would not have followed : Because that this was not the kind of *Rod* with which God would have *visited their Transgressions*, nor the kind of *Stripes* with which he would have *visited their Iniquities* ; since it is manifest that the *Messiah* was not sent for the sake of the *Jews* only, but also for the sake of the Gentiles ; and therefore if the Wickedness of the *Jews* had been extraordinary, this ought rather to have promoted than retarded his coming : Since the chief End for which the *Messiah* was sent was to instruct Mankind in their Duty, to * *speake the Words which the Lord should command him* ; to *teach us his Ways*, and publish the *Law from Zion*, and the *Word of the Lord from Jerusalem* ; to *make an Offering for Sin*, and to *bear our Iniquities*. And therefore the more wicked the *Jews* were, the more Reason there was for the
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* *Deut.* xviii. 18.

the coming of the *Messiah*. But as the Benefit of his coming was not confined to the *Jews*, but was designed also to extend to the Gentiles, that all the Nations of the Earth might be blessed in him; The Wickedness of the *Jews* is therefore a further Reason, why God should have expedited rather than delayed this extraordinary Blessing, that was designed for the Gentiles.

And in this Sentiment I am supported by the Declarations of some of the ancient *Jewish* Rabbins, whose Authority ought certainly to outweigh any of the latter Rabbins, as being undoubtedly the more impartial of the two; For among them it is a general Rule, that in the Promises of Good, as this of sending the *Messiah*, God always abides by his Promises: But in his Denunciations of Evil, if Men repent, he is not so strict, but is frequently pleased to defer the Punishment. It is accordingly said in the *Talmud*, that the coming of the *Messiah* might be accelerated, but could not be retarded. And to this Purpose you will find it positively asserted under the
 Title

Title *Shanedrim* Section *Helec*, where R. *Alexander* saith, that R. *Joshua* the Son of *Levi*, upon those Words of the Prophet *Isaiab* lx. 22. *I the Lord will hasten it in its Time*, made this Remark ; *I will hasten it*, that is, if they deserve it; but if they do not deserve it, I will do it *in its Time*. And to the same Purpose are the Observations in the Gloss on that very Text of *Ifai*. lx. 22. So that those Persons, who are not convinced of the divine Authority of those Revelations which are recorded in the *Jewish* Scriptures, must look upon this Supposition of the coming of the *Messiah* being delayed on Account of the Sins of the *Jews*, as an Evasion rather than an Answer.

If therefore the *Jews* will not engage in this undertaking of defending the Veracity of the Scriptures of the Hebrew Bible, and of shewing that the Prophecies contained therein, have been truly and exactly fulfilled according to the determined Times, and suitable to the manner in which they were foretold, I think I must : For as the Structure of the Christian Faith is
built

built upon the Foundation of the *Veracity* of the *Jewish* Scriptures, it now therefore seems incumbent upon those, who call themselves Christians, to step forth into this Field of Battle, in order to defend their own System; and to shew that these Prophecies, relating to the *Messiah*, were not only fulfilled, but were actually fulfilled in the Person of *Jesus*, whom they assert to be the *Messiah*, and to have appeared in the World above 1700 Years ago, and to have been put to Death by the *Jews* before the Destruction of the second Temple.

And I trust in God it will accordingly appear upon Examination, that this *Jesus* did answer all the Charaferifticks, which are to be found either in the Scriptures, or even in the *Talmud*, concerning the *Messiah* in his State of Humiliation. For he came before the Sceptre departed from *Judah*, and about 490 Years after the Commandment to restore and rebuild *Jerusalem*, and before the Destruction of the second Temple.

He

He had no earthly Father, being born of a Virgin without the Concurrence of Man; he performed Miracles; he published *the Law*, a new Law, *from Zion*, and the Word of *the Lord from Jerusalem*, not to the *Jews* only but also to the *Gentiles*; he was despised and rejected of Men; he was afflicted and oppressed, yet he opened not his Mouth; he was taken from Prison and from Judgement; and was cut off from the Land of the Living; *not for himself*, but *for the Transgression of the People was he stricken*, the Roman Governour that put him to Death at the earnest Sollicitation of the *Jews*, having declared that he *found in him no Fault at all*.

Nor did *Jesus* only answer the Descriptions which are given of the Time of the coming of the *Messiah*, or of his Purport in coming to give a new Law, or of the manner of his Sufferings or Death in general; but many of the particular Incidents of his Life and Passion answer so minutely, and so circumstantially, to the Predictions, which are to be found *written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and in the Psalms*

Psalms concerning the Messiah, that it is almost impossible to be deceived in them.

Thus when the Prophet *Zechariah* is speaking of the *Messiah* under the Character of a *King*, that shall enter into *Zion*; yet what sort of a *King* does he describe him to be? Not a triumphant, but a lowly one. For says he, † *Rejoice greatly O Daughter of Zion, shout O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having Salvation, lowly, and riding upon an Ass, and upon a Colt the Foal of an Ass.* Now as this Event is recorded to have happened to *Jesus*, who is acknowledged both by * *Jews* and *Christians* to have once entered into *Jerusalem* in this very manner; but which is not so much as mentioned ever to have happened to any other *King*, therefore it is to be supposed that *Jesus* is the particular Person here alluded to in this Prophecy; especially when we recollect that this same *Jesus* who entered into *Jerusalem* thus riding upon an *Ass*, and upon a *Colt the Foal*

† *Zach. ix. 9.* * *Mat. xxi. 1.* &c. *Sepher Toldoth Jesu.*

foal of an Ass, was there Crucified with this particular Inscription written over him in Letters of Latin, and Greek, and Hebrew,
 * *This is the King of the Jews.*

The particular manner of his Death was also foretold, for thus says the holy *David*,
 † *They pierced my Hands and my Feet.*
 Now as this never happened to *David* personally, the Application of this Saying, which was fulfilled in *Jesus*, must be understood of the *Messiah*, who is frequently alluded to § by *David* under his own Name, and by the rest of the Prophets under the Name and Character of *David*. And what is remarkable is this, that this kind of Death, that is Crucifixion, which was inflicted upon *Jesus*, was not a Jewish but a Roman manner of Punishment. And hence it appears that the Sceptre was at that Time departed from *Judah*, and of Consequence that *Shiloh*, or the *Messiah*, ought according to the Prophecy of *Jacob*, to be already come.

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* *Mat.* xxvii. 37. *Luke* xxiii. 38. † *Pf.* xxii. 16.
 § *Psal.* ii. &c.

It is likewise further to be observed that this Punishment of Piercing his Hands and his Feet, was not inflicted upon *Jesus* at his own Request, or at the Suit of his Friends, in order to have the Prophecy fulfilled, but was ordered by *Pontius Pilate* the Roman Governor, at the earnest Solicitation of the *Jews* who were the most bitter Enemies of *Jesus*.

Again the holy David says, * *He keepeth all his Bones; not one of them is broken.* Which was very remarkably fulfilled in *Jesus*, when we consider that the other two Persons, who were Crucified at the same Time with him, had their Bones broken in order to hasten their Death. And what is very particular in this Circumstance is, that this shews that *Jesus* was that great Sacrifice of which the Paschal Lamb was but a Type and a Figure. Nor can it otherwise be accounted for why Almighty God should be so particular and positive in giving this Direction to *Moses* in

* *Psalms* xxxiv, 20.

in preparing the Paschal Lamb, as to say, †
Neither shall ye break a Bone thereof;
 unless it was thereby to point out the *Mef-*
siab when he should be sent unto them.

And in another Place the Psalmist proceeding and speaking in the Spirit concerning the *Mefsiab* § faith, *They part my Garments among them, and cast Lots upon my Vesture.* Which Particularity, insignificant as it is, is yet of great Moment to shew that in the fullfilling of this Prophecy neither *Jesus* nor his Friends could have any share in the Contrivance, which was entirely owing to the Determination of the Roman Soldiery among themselves.

The Prophet *Isaiah* also when Speaking of the *Mefsiab* faith, || *He made his Grave with the Wicked and with the Rich in his Death.* Or to translate it literally, *He gave the Wicked his Burial and with the Rich in his Deaths.* So that if it be not allowed that, according to the first Method of translation, this Prophecy should allude to the Crucifixion of *Jesus* between two Theives,
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† *Exod.* xii. 46. *Num.* ix. 12. § *Pf.* xxii. 18. || *Isai.* liii. 9.

and thereby making his Grave with the Wicked : Yet it cannot be denied that the whole passage must allude to his being intombed in the Vault belonging to *Joseph of Arimathea*, which was sealed up, and watched by Roman Soldiers, at the Request of those *Jews*, who had solicited his Crucifixion; by which Means he literally gave the Wicked his Burial with the rich at his Death.

But as it may be Objected that these Matters of Fact, which are Asserted of *Jesus* by the Christian Writers, are not true; it therefore rests upon the Christians to prove these Matters of Fact really to have been such as they are reported.

As to the Matter of Fact that there was such a Person as *Jesus*, who lived in *Judea* not very long before the Destruction of the second Temple, who performed several Miracles, and was put to Death by the Jews for pretending to be the *Messiah*; this I say, there will be very little Occasion for my attempting to prove with Regard to the Jews; because it is acknowledged by the Jews themselves, not only in the *Tal-*
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mud

mud, that there was such a Person about that Time; but also in a Treatise which is in repute among the Jews, and is entitled *Sepher Toldoth Jeshu*, that is, *The Book of the Generation of Jesus*, or *the History of the Life of Jesus*. Which Book was written expressly with a Design to villify his Character, and set forth the History of his Life and Actions in the most unfavourable Light that was possible.

Now in this Book it is nevertheless acknowledged that *Jesus* was born at *Bethlehem*; that he was born of a young Woman, whose Name was *Mary*, who was with Child of *Jesus* before ever she and her Husband, to whom she was betrothed, came together; that, when he grew up, several Miracles were performed not only by himself, but also by his Disciples in his Name; that those Miracles were of an extraordinary Nature, and consisted not only in feeding a great Multitude with a few Fishes, and in curing the Leprosy by a Word of his Mouth, but also in bringing the dead back again to Life; that he entered Jerusalem riding on an Ass; that he was
be-

betrayed into the Hands of the high Priests by one *Judas*; that he was scourged; that he had a Crown of Thorns put upon his Head; that he was at last Crucified on the Day of the Preparation for the Passover: And that after his Death twelve of his Disciples went Abroad preaching these Things all over the World.

And indeed I cannot help taking Notice of one particularity that is mentioned of *Simon Peter*, who is said to be one of these twelve Disciples; which is, that this *Simon Peter* went about doing the same Kind of Wonders which his Master had done before; and among other things published every where, that he was sent by *Jesus* to declare that the Obligation to the ceremonial Laws of *Moses* was dissolved, according to the Prophecy of *Isaiab*, where he saith,
** Bring me no more vain Oblations, Incense is an Abomination to me, the New Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with; it is Iniquity even the solemn Meeting. Your New Moons,*

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and

* *Isai.* i. 13, 14.

and your appointed Feasts, my Soul hateth; they are a Trouble to me, I am weary to bear them: And again according to the Prophet *Hosea*, when he saith, * *ye are not my People:* And that he also declared, that it was in the Power of *Jesus* to have extirpated the whole Race of unbelieving Jews from off the Face of the Earth; but that he chose to continue them, in a State of Dispersion and Affliction, as living Witnesses and Memorials of that Crucifixion which he had submitted to for the Redemption of Mankind.

But then, in Order to invalidate the Force of this Testimony in Evidence of *Jesus* being the *Messiah*, these same Books speak of this *Jesus* as living during the Reign of *Alexander Jannæus* the Son of *Hircanus*; which, being about an hundred Years before the real Time of his Birth, would prevent the Prophecy of *Daniel*, which foretold that the coming of the *Messiah* should be in seventy Weeks after the Commandment went forth to build the
second

second Temple, from being applied to him. This Book likewise says that *Mary* the Mother of Jesus was gotten with Child by natural Means, being deceived by the contrivance of her Mother, who brought one *Joseph* to her Bed instead of her betrothed Husband, upon which her real Husband fled to *Babylon*. Which part of the History confutes it self; for can it be supposed that a young Woman of age sufficient for Marriage, whose Innocence, whose Modesty, her Enemies are far from impeaching, but rather speak in Praise of, should yet be so regardless of the Person of the Man to whom she was betrothed, as not to know him again when she saw him; or that she would be so careless even of her own Person, as not to be sure that the Man, whom she admitted to her Embraces, was the Person to whom she was betrothed? it seems to me indeed absurd to suppose it.

But what effectually discovers the Falseness of this Part of the Story is that Circumstance in the Narration, which mentions that her real Husband, instead of prosecuting either her, her Mother, or her *Para-*

mour, quitted the Country and went out of shame to *Babylon*. And now I appeal to the ingenuous Reader whether he can think this to be credible; that in those Days of Jealousy and of easy Divorce, a Person injured in so tender a Point, and where the Fact was notorious and needed so little Proof, should rather fly his Country, than do himself Justice in a legal Way? This Part of the Story however though manifestly false as to the main of it, confirms that Part of the History of *Jesus*, as related by the Christians, which speaks of his being born of a betrothed Virgin, before she and her Spouse ever came together, for which she was never prosecuted. Which in those Days, when Adultery was so highly resented, and so severely punished, can hardly be accounted for by natural means.

As to the Miracles which *Jesus* is said to have performed, in order to take off the Effect of their Evidence, they are in the Talmud said to be done by the Power of ArtMagick. And in the *Sepher Toldoth Jesusu* his Method of acquiring this Magical Art is attributed to one of the strangest Devices

Devices that ever entered into the Head of Man to invent; the bare Narration of which must I think carry its own Confutation along with it. For say they, these Miracles were performed by his having learned the Name *Schemhamepheras*. The Letters of which who ever learns may do whatever Miracles he pleaseth. Which Name it seems, they say, was written on the Stone which supported the Ark in the Sanctuary of the first Temple; and to defend which Name from being known for the Future, the Jewish Rabbins had prepared, by Virtue of pronouncing the same Name, two Lions of Brass, at the building of the second Temple, which they placed on two Columns over against the Door of the Sanctuary; so that whenever any one entered and had learned the Letters of the aforesaid Word, those Lions set up such a horrible Roar that being struck with the Terror thereof the Person, who had learned the Name, always forgot both the Word and the Letters. But that *Jesus of Nazareth* having entered, and learned the Name, wrote down the Letters in a piece of Parch-

ment, which he sowed up in his Thigh before he came out; so that when he returned, though he was so frightened by the Roar of the Lions that he had forgotten the Name, yet upon his going home, having opened his Thigh, he then learned the Word a fresh which he had forgotten: by the Virtue of which he was enabled to perform all those wonderful Works which are related of him.

I think it would be trifling with my Readers Time to make any Remarks upon this absurd Piece of History; which whatever Effect it might have had in the former Days of Ignorance and Credulity; I am persuaded will make no Impression at present on the Mind of any one, who has the least Tincture of Learning, or even the least Knowledge of the World, to the Prejudice of the Divine Authority of those Miracles, which these Authors allow were actually performed by *Jesus of Nazareth*. The Acknowledgment of which, by Persons prejudiced against him, establishes the Matter of Fact, of their having been performed, upon such a Footing, as to leave no Room for doubting the Truth of it.

But

But that the Proof, of *Jesus* of *Nazareth's* being the Messiah, may not depend upon such slight Evidence as this Book here referred to, I shall therefore proceed to shew, that all those Matters of Fact, which are reported of him by those who call themselves *Christians*, are really true.

Now as in all our Dealings between Man and Man when we want to be certified of the Truth of any Matter of Fact, of which, either on account of the Distance of Time or Place, we are incapable of being satisfied by the Evidence of our own Senses, we are necessarily obliged to have recourse to the Testimony of others; so of Consequence in the Case now before us, we must apply for our Satisfaction to the Testimony of others; according to the Degrees of which, we shall be obliged in Reason either to restrain, or to yeild our Assent.

And as no Person ought to expect a greater Degree of Belief to be given to his Testimony, than the Nature of the Evidence demands; so ought no reasonable Man ever to require any more, or other Kind of Proof to be given for any Matter
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of Fact, than the Nature of the Thing will bear.

Where the Proof of a Matter of Fact depends upon Testimony, the highest Degree of Proof, that can be given, hath been reduced by one of the strictest * Reasoners of the last Age to the Consideration of these *Six* Particulars. First, the Number of the Witnesses. Secondly, their Integrity. Thirdly, their Skill. Fourthly, the Design of the Author, where it is a Testimony out of a Book cited. Fifthly, the Consistency of the Parts, and Circumstances of the Relation. And Sixthly, Contrary Testimonies. I think therefore we cannot possibly take a fairer Method in the Proof of those Matters of Fact, which we want to evince, than by producing our Evidence, and trying it according to the Rules here prescribed.

(1) *First* then as to the *Number* of our Witnesses which though tolerably large, if we were to bring in the Epistles which were written by the Apostles of *Jesus* to their several Churches, yet for Brevity
 sake

* *Lock of Hum. Under. L. iv. C. xv, xvi.*

fake we shall insist only upon *Four* Witnesses, as being a sufficient Number for establishing of Truth. Two of which were the Eye Witnesses and Companions of the Life of *Jesus*; and the other two were contemporaries therewith, and had their Accounts from those who were Eye Witnesses. All which four have left the History of the Life and Conversation of *Jesus* in Writing behind them. The Names of these four Historians, who were all *Jews*, are *Mathew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*.

Mathew was a Publican, that is, one who received the Customs, or Tribute, that was at this Time paid by the *Jews* to the Romans; which was no advantageous Part of his Character, those who undertook that Employment being rendered thereby very odious to the rest of the *Jews*. His Hebrew Name was* *Levi* the Son *Alpheus*, who having followed *Jesus*, and having been an Eye Witness of the Miracles which he performed, and being thereby convinced that he was the *Messiah*, wrote an † Account

* *Mat.* ix. 9, 11. *Mark* ii. 14. *Luke* v. 27. † *Euseb. Eccles.* L. iii. C. 24.

count thereof for the Use of the Inhabitants of *Palestine*. Which Account having been written in the Hebrew, or rather Syriack Tongue in the Hebrew, or Chaldee Character, was soon translated into Greek for the Use of those who did not understand the other Language; which is the Copy that is now come to our Hands.

Mark was a Disciple, and Auditor, and Companion of *Peter*, who was one of the Apostles, and most early Disciples of *Jesus*; and is acknowledged as such in that Book, which I have before mentioned, entitled *Sepher Toldos Jesbu*.

Luke was in the same Circumstance with *Mark*, not an Eye-Witness himself, but having conversed with those that were, he wrote an History of the Life and Transactions of *Jesus* for the use of one *Theophilus*, as he himself informs us in the Introduction to his History, in this manner; *For as much as many have taken in Hand to set forth in Order a Declaration of those Things which are most surely believed among us; even as they delivered them unto us, which from the Beginning were*
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Eye-Witnesses, and Ministers of the Word:
It seemed good to me also, having had perfect Understanding of all Things FROM THE VERY FIRST, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mayest know the Certainty of those Things wherein thou hast been instructed.

The Words here rendered *from the very first*, are in the original expressed by the Word *Ἀνωθεν*, which may very fairly and honestly be translated *from above* according to its literal Signification, which would give his Testimony still greater Weight; but to avoid Disputes, I have quoted the Words of St. *Luke* according to the vulgar Translation; and will suppose his Testimony to have no other Force than that of an inquisitive Reporter of what he had heard: Though if the whole Paragraph here quoted be rightly considered, the Strength of his Argument for writing to *Theophilus*, upon a Subject which had been handled by others according to the Report of those *which from the Beginning were Eye-Witnesses, and Ministers of the Word*, must depend upon this,
 that

that he had a stronger Assurance of the Truth of what he reports, than barely hearsay Evidence; having also been confirmed of the Truth thereof by Inspiration *from Above*.

Luke was a Physician by Profession, and of Consequence a Man of Letters; and being one of the many who expected the coming of the *Messiah* about that Time; if we suppose that he was only attentive to the Accounts which he heard of the Miracles of *Jesus from the very first*; and though no Eye-Witness himself, yet having taken his Information from those that were, must be allowed to be a good corroborating Evidence. Which also probably was the Case of *Mark*, who though he does not mention it, yet it is very likely that he was also attentive to those Things *from the very first*;

John was the favourite Disciple of *Jesus*, and having lived to a great Age, was pressed by his * Friends, to set down before his Death, an Account in Writing of the

* *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. L. iii. C. xxiv.*

the History of *Jesus* ; upon which having revised those Accounts which had been written by the three aforementioned Persons, he set down those Particulars of Moment which had been omitted by them. So that two of our Witnesses being Eye-Witnesses, and the other two having been attentive Enquirers *from the very first* into those Matters of Fact which they relate as told them by other Eye-Witnesses, there can be no Objection made to *the Number* of our Witnesses; since, if these two last mentioned should be rejected, there would still remain *two*, who were themselves Eye-Witnesses, and according to the† Law of *Moses*, as well as the subsequent Practice of all Nations, two Witnesses are sufficient to establish the Truth of any Matter.

(1) We must now therefore proceed in the *second* Place to consider *the Integrity* of the Witnesses; for though their Numbers were never so great, if there is Reason to suspect their Integrity, the Degree of Assent which we are to yield to their Assertions,

* Deut. xvii. 6. xix. 15.

sertions, ought certainly to be regulated thereby. Now the Integrity of these Witnesses will appear, if we do but consider, in the first Place, the artless and undisguised manner in which their Narrations are related ; so as not to conceal the Failings and Infirmities either of themselves, or of their best Friends. Thus it is fairly acknowledged that *Matthew* was a Publican ; nor is there the least Disguise thrown over the Ambition of the Sons of *Zebedee* ; the Diffidence of *Thomas* ; or the Backslidings of *Peter*, and the Timidity of the rest of the Apostles of *Jesus* ; all which are set forth in the strongest Light. And what gives no small Proof of their Integrity is the Consideration, that although these four Witnesses agree in their Evidence, with Regard to the principal Matters of Fact, they yet disagree so much in the manner of their Narration, as to remove all Suspicion of any Collusion among them.

But what proves their Integrity beyond all manner of Dispute is, that they could have no Interest in publishing these Matters of Fact, but barely the Love of Truth ;
and

and the distant Expectation of a future Reward in another World. For as to this World, they must have given *that* up from the Moment that *Jesus* declared in the Face of the whole Jewish People, at the Time of his Trial, that his *Kingdom was not of this World*.

But after his Death there could be no Hopes at all left, whatever Hopes they might have had till then, of any worldly Profit in being a Disciple of *Jesus*. For then daily Experience convinced them of the Truth of what *Jesus* had in his Life Time often declared unto them, that they should be as † *Lambs and Sheep in the midst of Wolves*; That they should not escape better than their Master; but that as his Enemies had persecuted him, so should they § persecute his Disciples also: That they should be put out of the Synagogues, nay, || *the Time cometh*, said he, *when whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God Service*. Which Sayings were probably verified in the particular

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† *Mat. x. 16. Luke x. 3. § John xv. 20. || John xvi. 2.*

Case of every one of these four Historians; who certainly subjected themselves to Ignominy, Reproach and Persecution for the sake of that Doctrine, which they published to the World: And two of them undoubtedly suffered Death rather than retract that truth, which they had so publicly declared. So that after this there is no Room left to doubt of the *Integrity* of these Witnesses; since the suffering of Death, or even Persecution, in Justification of ones Opinion, whether true or false, is the strongest Proof which it is possible for any Man to give of his *Integrity* at least.

(3) But as it may be urged, that a Mans Honesty is no Proof of his Ability; and that these poor well meaning Men may have been deceived; therefore it will be necessary in the *Third* Place to consider *the Skill of our Witnesses*. And here it must be acknowledged that it does not appear, that these Persons were bred up to any great share of Literature, if we except *St. Luke* who was a Physician: But then it is to be observed on the other hand, that the Evidence to which their Testimony is produced

duced requires no great Skill, either in judging of, or in the Narration. Whereas the Simplicity of their Lives and Conversations, as it renders them the freer from all Suspicion of attempting to impose upon their Readers; so does it make their Evidence the more credible; provided they had but *Skill* enough to prevent being imposed upon themselves, in the Things which they relate. Now as the History which they have written consists only in reporting certain Matters of Fact, which they saw and heard, every Man, that has but Eyes and Ears and common Sense, has Skill enough to be a Judge of such kind of Things. They tell you the Facts that *Jesus* did. They tell you the Words that he Spoke. The Consequence to be deduced from thence, belongs to the Reader as well as to them.

They tell you that he was born at *Bethlehem*, and that he lived at *Nazareth*, and that he went about, during the last three Years and a half of his Life, doing certain Works which appeared to them to be miraculous; and that *Jesus* argued from thence to prove the Divinity of his Mis-

sion: But it is the Readers Business to judge whether that Argument be conclusive. They tell you what those Works were: Feeding thousands of People with two Loaves of Bread, and a few small Fishes; healing the Sick in an Instant; curing the Leprous; the Blind; the Deaf; and the Lame; And what is more than all, bringing the Dead back again to Life; not only after they had been dead some Hours, but some Days; One when he was actually carrying upon the Bier to the Grave; and another after he had been some Days in the Grave. They tell you that he entered into *Jerusalem* riding upon an Ass; that he was betrayed by one *Judas* in the Reign of the Roman Emperor *Tiberius*; that he was ordered to be Crucified by the Roman Governor *Pontius Pilate* at the earnest Sollicitation of the *Jews*; and that he was buried in the Tomb belonging to one *Joseph of Arimathæa*; that he rose from thence on the third Day, and was seen and felt by his Disciples, and conversed frequently with them for 40 Days afterwards.

Now

Now it requires no great Skill in any Witness to be a Judge of all these kind of things, and to tell whether a Man be blind, or has his Eyesight; whether he be leprous or clean; alive or dead: And with a very small Degree of Attention, any Person with the meanest Abilities hath Skill sufficient to judge, whether these wonderfull Cures were done according to the ordinary Rules of Physick, or were effected in a Moment, by a Touch of the Hand, or even by the Speaking of a Word. So that with Regard to such Transactions as these, no Objection can lie against *the Skill* of these Witnesses.

(4) Hence we come in the *Fourth* Place to consider *the Design of these Authors*. Which certainly could not be bad; as the whole Purport of the Religion which they inculcate is evidently calculated to recommend Piety towards God, and good Will towards Man. Nor is it credible that these Books could have been written with an evil Design of imposing on the World, when we consider that the Authors could be no Gainers by such an Imposture. When

the Christian Religion began to be countenanced by Princes and Potentates, and had once gotten some Footing in the World, Interest, or Vanity, or a misguided Zeal, might have excited some weak Men to the Practice of pious Frauds in privately composing some Books to propagate their own Opinions. But this is not the Case of the Authors now before us, who publickly avowed their own Works, and at a Time when they could have no View either of worldly Profit or Praise. Nor is it reasonable to think that had they known the Christian Religion to have been false, their Zeal would ever have allowed them to proceed so far in the Cheat, as to be real Sufferers themselves, only that others might be the Gainers. Nor would they have endured Persecution rather than retract, or suffer Death rather than deny, the Truth of what they asserted. And when we consider that the general Purport of these Books is to recommend the Practice of Virtue and Goodness and the Love of Truth, we may be sure that real Falsehood would never take Pains to bring about these Purposes;

poses; since whatever Guise it may assume, and put outwardly upon itself, something very different from all these would lye hid underneath; and that, let the Pretences be never so specious, something of Worldly Interest would be couched at the Bottom. Whereas these Authors, who wrote the History of a Person after he was dead, whom they acknowledge and declare to have been ignominiously crucified, must be acquitted from having any such *Design*.

(5) So that we may proceed in the *Fifth* Place, to consider *the Consistency of the Parts, and the Circumstances of the Relation*. Which will bear but very little Controversy; since whoever will give himself the Trouble of reading these four Authors will see one general Scheme carried on through each of them; wherein they give us a short account of the Life of *Jesus*, from his Birth to the Time of his Ascension into Heaven. In which they are not only so consistent with themselves, but also with each other, as to produce a wonderfull and surprizing Harmony, whenever they are compared together: though they

were written at different Times, and in very different Parts of the World. And whoever compares them will find a sufficient Difference in the circumstantial Parts of the Narration, though not in the material, to prevent the Suspicion of the least Possibility of Combination ; as the few Places and small Circumstances, which at first view seem to disagree, are of such Nature that they either admit an easy Reconciliation, or must be ascribed to a Mistake in the Transcribers of the Copies.

To which it may further be added, that these Books have been handed down, as those of the Old Testament were from Father to Son; with this Difference, that the Christians were not of one Nation, as the Jews were, and therefore the less likely to enter into any combination or Collusion, either in the Composition or Communication of them; And that they were never entirely missing, but that we can trace them back directly to the Fountain Head.

And indeed there is one Circumstance attending these Histories to the Veracity of which the Jews themselves, as well as
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the City of *Jerusalem*, are a standing and a living Evidence; which is, that they contain a Prophecy relating to the * Dispersion of the Jews, and the Destruction of the Temple, which continues daily to be fulfilled. The Force of which was attempted to be eluded by the Emperor *Julian*, who employed the Power of the Roman Empire in endeavouring to rebuild the Temple, and replace the Jews in their own Land; but was defeated of his Purposes, by the visible but supernatural Eruption of Globes of Fire through the Foundations of the Temple, which never ceased scattering Destruction about them, till the undertakers desisted from their Attempt. Which is a Matter of Fact, in which all Historians who mention those Times and Transactions, whether Christian, Jewish, or Heathen, unanimously agree in.

(6) Having thus considered the Consistency of the Parts, and the Circumstances of the History of the Life of *Jesus*, as related by the four Evangelists, we come now to the

* *Mat.* xxiv. 1, 2, 15. *Mark* xiii. 2, 14. *Luk.* xix. 14, 43, 44. *xxi.* 24.

the *Sixth*, and last Criterion, by which the Truth of this History is to be tried, which is the *Contrary Testimonies*. And under this Head I am sure it does not yet appear, that any have ever been produced, which will in the least invalidate their Testimony.

Whereas if the Adversaries of Christianity who lived at that Time, when the Gospels were written, had not been sure, that those things were really true as they are set down, we may be certain that, as they wanted not Abilities, so neither would they have wanted Inclinations to have exposed them.

But if the Evidence of those Persons who were bred up in a contrary opinion, and continued to be Adversaries to Christianity till they were advanced in Years, though afterwards convinced of their Errors, may be comprehended under the Character of *contrary Testimony*; then some of the strongest Proofs, which are to be produced for the Corroborating and confirming of the Truth of the History, as related by these four Evangelists, are of this Kind; For of this Sort were all the early Converts

Converts to Christianity: But in particular *Paul of Tarsus*; who was at first not only not a Friend to Christianity, but a bitter Enemy to it; *persecuting the Church and binding and delivering into Prison both Men and Women*: Whose Epistles are come down to our Hands, giving an Account of his Conversion, and the History of the principal Part of whose Life is likewise still extant, in the Book entitled, the Acts of the Apostles, written by his Companion *Luke*, who is one of the four Evangelists.

But if under the Head of *contrary Testimonies* those only are to be comprehended, who lived and died of a contrary Perswasion; we have great Reason to lament the Loss of that Account, which *Pontius Pilate* sent to *Tiberius Cæsar*, the then Roman Emperor, of the Transactions which passed during his Government of *Judæa*. For that *Jesus* was therein mentioned in an extraordinary manner we have great Reason to believe from the Works of *Justin Martyr*, who lived about 100 Years after the Death of *Jesus*; and who, in his
Apology

Apology for the Christian Religion, which he * dedicated to the Emperor *Antoninus*, to the *Cæsars* his Sons, and to the whole Senate and People of *Rome*, and which he delivered in, being then an Inhabitant of that City himself, appealed to this Record for the Truth of what he affirmed in Favour of *Jesus*. The Works however of *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, and *Dion Cassius*, all Heathen Writers, are come down to our Hands, and they confirm that Circumstance mentioned by the four Evangelists of an Order being issued from *Augustus Caesar* that the whole Empire should be taxed. And † *Tacitus* particularly mentions, that in the Reign of *Tiberius*, when *Pontius Pilate* was Governor of *Judæa*, *Jesus* was brought in Judgment before him condemned and Crucified. And both || he and § *Suetonius* mention the current * Report then prevalent, that some Person coming out of *Judæa* should obtain the Dominion of the Earth. Which though they
 apply

* *Euseb. Eccles. Hist. L. iv. C. xi. xii.* † *Tacit. Anna. L. xv. S. xliv.* || *Tacit. Hist. L. v.* § *Suet. L. viii. Sect. iv.* * *Pererebuerat Rumor.*

apply wrongly to the then reigning Roman Emperors, who had been in *Judæa*, is an undoubted Proof however that there was a general Expectation, which prevailed about that Time, of some extraordinary Person arising in *Judæa*. And whence should this Report arise? But from the Prophetick Writings of the *Jews*, which gave them Expectations of the coming of their *Messiah* about that Time, whom they, as well as the aforementioned Historians, falsely understood to be a temporal Prince, and a triumphant worldly Hero.

And I think I may venture to affirm, that where any Heathen Writers have mentioned any of the Particulars which are recorded by the four Evangelists, instead of contradicting them, they always confirm their Testimony: And for the Truth of this I will venture to appeal even to your own Historian, the famous *Josephus*.

But it is not to be wondered at, if many Instances are not to be produced of this Nature; First, because there were few or no Historians who lived in *Judæa*, where these Transactions happened. And Secondly,

ly, because the Actions performed by *Jesus* are not such, as are the proper Subjects of History; which concerns itself more with Politicks, than Religion. But where the Subject of any of the prophane Historians hath led them to treat about those Affairs which referred to the History of *Jesus*, there we always find a remarkable Confirmation of the Veracity of these four Evangelists, without any one Instance that I have ever yet heard of to the contrary.

Even *Celsus*, *Julian*, *Porphry*, and *Hieracles*, who were all not only Pagans, but professed Enemies of Christianity, acknowledge the Matters of Fact, and allow the Miracles recorded of *Jesus* to have been performed; but only deny them to have been done by the Power of God, and ascribe them to the Power of Art-Magic: As also does the * *History of the Life of Jesus* before mentined, which was written by a professed Jew. And surely the Testimony of the Jews themselves must be allowed to be of no small Weight in this Affair.

* *Sepher Toldoth Jesu.*

fair. Especially when we consider that according to their own † Traditions one of the characteristical Marks, whereby the *Messiah* is to be known, is the Power which he shall exercise in the Performance of Miracles, which Miracles, says the Tradition, shall by the Ungodly of those Days be attributed not to the Hand of God, but the Power of Art-Magick.

And thus having gone through the Six Criteria, which are fixed by Mr. *Lock*, as sufficient Tests for ascertaining and establishing the Degrees of Probability : And having shewed, that the *Number* of our Witnesses is such, as hath been thought sufficient in all Ages to determine our Assent, even in the Courts of Judicature ; that their having suffered Persecution and Death rather than retract their Assertions, is a sufficient Proof of their *Integrity* ; that they had *Skill* equal to their Undertaking, which was only to relate Matters of Fact ; that the *Design* of these Authors could not be to deceive, as there was no Possi-

† See Page 37.

Possibility of their gaining any Thing thereby; that the *Parts*, as well as *Circumstances* of their Relation, were all consistent together, and concurred in carrying on the general Scheme of a *Messiah*; and that no *contrary Testimonies* can be produced, but what rather tend to prove that *Jesus* was that *Messiah*; I think we may in the Words of Mr. * *Lock* also assert, that
 “ where all these concur in the Proof of
 “ any one Thing, there Probability upon
 “ such Grounds carries so much Evidence
 “ with it, that it naturally determines the
 “ Judgment, and leaves us as little Liberty
 “ to believe or disbelieve, as a Demonstration does whether we will know, or
 “ be ignorant.

So that the only Difficulty which seems to remain is this; which must indeed be acknowledged as a Thing at first Sight to be wondered at, that if these Things are true, and that they are true I think can hardly be doubted, how it comes to pass that the *Jews*, who were perpetually looking into
 and

* *Lock* of Hum. Und. L. iv. C. xvi.

and searching, the prophetical Writings; and who were at the Time of the coming of *Jesus*, † *waiting for Redemption in Jerusalem*; and we're then in full Expectation of the coming of the *Messiah*; should not more universally, than they did, acknowledge the completion of these Prophecies in the Person of *Jesus*? The Reason however is not very difficult to assign; if we do but consider the strong Impression which the Thoughts of a triumphat *Messiah* in the Form of an heroick and worldly Prince had made upon their Minds; together with the strong Tendency, which seems implanted by God in all Mankind towards that Religion in which they have been educated, whence arise most of those Difficulties that every one meets with in his Attempt to make Converts from any one Religion to another; especially to a Religion, which required the Mortification of their Passions, their quitting their worldly Interests, and which obliged them utterly to relinquish those Ceremonies in which they had been bred up from their

L Infancy;

† *Lu.* ii. 38. *Job.* i. 41. iv. 25.

Infancy : Which whoever tries will find very difficult to bring about, even with those who are educated in the most absurd Doctrines of Popery, or Heathenism or Mahometanism.

For though Almighty God in his Dispensations with Mankind is willing to afford them a reasonable Degree of Conviction, such as is sufficient to prevail with Men of teachable, unprejudiced, and impartial Dispositions; yet he hath not made the Investigation of Truth so easy, or so plain, in any one Branch of Knowledge, as to strike the Indolent and Uninquisitive; or to necessitate and force the Assent of the prejudiced and perverse: Because this would take away the Virtue and Merit of an impartial Enquiry, and remove all Claim and Title to Rewards and Punishments. And for this Reason Almighty God was pleased to describe the coming of the *Messiah* in such a Manner, as that Men of unprejudiced Minds, whose Affections were not tied to this World, might know him and distinguish him from all others, and of Consequence believe in him, when he did

did come: But that Men of worldly Minds, and perverse Passions, might yet have Room to meet with strong Delusion and believe a Lie. That none of the Wicked should understand it, but that the Wise should understand it.

And hence, although these Prophecies, which described the Person of the *Messiah*, as beforementioned, at the Time of his first coming, represented him in a lowly and humble Character, and as in a State of Humiliation; yet when the same Prophets spake of his second coming *in the latter Days*, those Prophecies were expressed in all the Pomp and Glory, and Magnificence, that the elevated Pen of an Eastern Genius could express. That he should * *have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River to the Ends of the Earth.* † *That his Name should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising up of the Sun to the going down of the same. That in every Place Incense should be offered unto his Name.* And that || *of the Increase of his*

L 2

Govern-

• Ps. lxxii. 8. † Mal i. 11. || Is. ix. 7.

Government, and Peace, there should be no End. Which last Characteristicks being more acceptable to Men of worldly and sensual Inclinations, when such consulted the Bible, they could easily see their *Messiah* typified in *David* or *Solomon*, but could not bear to think of his being typified by the Offering up of *Isaac*, or the Institution of the Paschal Lamb.

And hence it came to pass, that although the coming of *Jesus* as the *Messiah*, in so mean a Character as that of a Carpenter's Son, and who was afterwards Crucified, was acknowledged by *Anna* and *Simeon*, and some illiterate Fishermen, it was yet *a stumbling-Block to the Jews, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* It seemed a Contradiction in Terms, to Men of worldly Minds, and who valued themselves for their worldly Wisdom, to suppose a *Deliverer* could be Crucified; and a *Redeemer* put to Death. They saw no Slavery in Sin; and therefore thought of no *Deliverance* from thence; nor of any *Redemption* from the Power of the Grave. They desired no Exemption, but from the Roman Yoke;

Yoke ; no Triumph but over worldly Enemies ; and no Victory but over Armies that opposed them. They never considered that they were greater Slaves to their own Passions, than they were to the Roman Senate ; that Death and Hell were the worst of Enemies ; and the Devil a greater Tyrant than *Cæsar*.

But as I do not apprehend that you are of this Cast of mind, I have taken the Liberty of laying these Papers before you for your Perusal, and I trust in God for your Conviction ; and I beseech the great God, to whom the Secrets of all Hearts are open, to send that holy Spirit, which he sent to illuminate the Minds of the Prophets of old, into your Hearts to inspire you with the Love and Knowledge of Truth ; and that he will remove from you all Ignorance and Hardness of Heart, and give you a right Judgement in all Things ; that forsaking all worldly and carnal Affections, you may acknowledge the true *Messiah*, and by humbling your Thoughts to confess
him

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him in his State of Humiliation, may be admitted to partake with him in his State of Exaltation and Glory. Which is and shall be the constant Prayer of

S I R,

Your sincere Wellwisher

And humble Servant,

ROBERT CLOGHER.

F I N I S.

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